

THE MAGAZINE FOR WRESTLING FANS

Wrestling

REVUE

FEBRUARY
1962 / 50¢



Features:

**THE VIOLENT WORLD
OF BIG BILL MILLER**

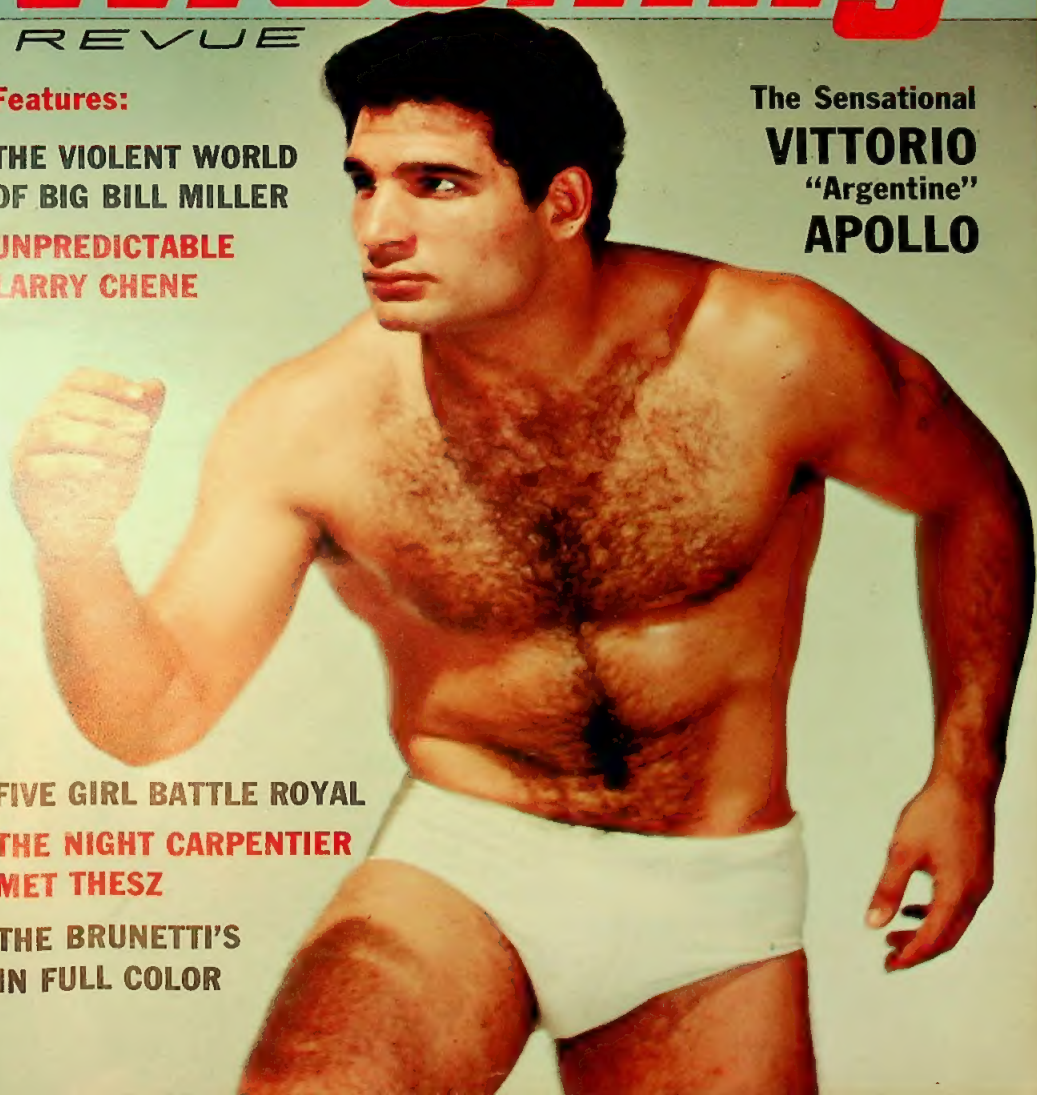
**UNPREDICTABLE
LARRY CHENE**

The Sensational
VITTORIO
"Argentine"
APOLLO

FIVE GIRL BATTLE ROYAL

**THE NIGHT CARPENTIER
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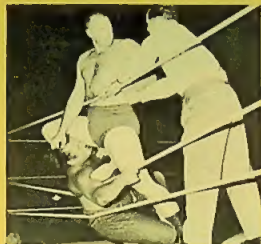
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Readers Pros and Cons



VON ERICH AND REFEREE

WRESTLING REFEREES

Sirs:

I certainly agree one hundred per cent with WR (Dec./61), when it said that something must be done about inefficient referees. They're murdering the sport. Don't misunderstand me, I'm not beefing just because a favorite of mine happened to lose a match because of poor officiating. What I am beefing about is that wrestling referees so often see a violation of the rules—and don't do anything about it! I realize it is impossible for a referee to see everything that goes on during a match, but he can't help but see at least some of the violations committed. When he does, he should act immediately to penalize the violator.

DALE SMITH
Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Sirs:

I'm glad at last that somebody has spoken out about the ineptitude of wrestling referees. Often I have seen referees play favorites during matches. Just recently, in a bout between Bob Ellis and the Bruiser, Ellis was counted out even though he had one leg under the ropes. Incidents like this disgust the fans.

JOHN SERVICE
Waterbury, Conn.

Sirs:

I agree that something must be done about wrestling referees—and fast! I suggest that every match have not one but two referees. Perhaps then things like Bobby Davis booting an official out of the ring so that his (Davis') boy, Buddy Rogers, would not be counted out even though he was stretched out cold, would no longer be possible. In case you're interested, the man who stretched out the champion was Billy Darnell, who should be the champion.

ISABEL H. HYDE
Paterson, N. J.

Sirs:

WR's tremendous article about wrestling referees hit the nail right on the head. I agree that the only way to get the job done properly is to have two referees for every match. It is a physical impossibility for any one man to see all that goes on during a bout, especially if tag teams are involved.

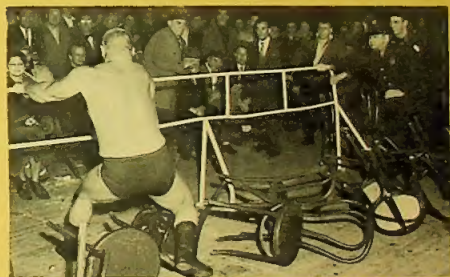
By the way, the Dec./61 issue was the first copy of WR I ever saw. But you can rest assured that I will buy every one from now on. It's the finest magazine I ever read.

MRS. JAMES W. SAUNDERS
Colonial Heights, Va.

Sirs:

You suggest in your article about wrestling referees that every match should have two referees. Come now, you know as well as I do that a little fracture of the rules now and then makes for a more interesting bout. Many people go to wrestling matches just to see the villain get his brains knocked out. With two referees in there enforcing the rules we'd soon have no villains at all. Wrestling would then be a bore.

AL CHESKY
Glenview, Ill.



BRUISER AT WORK

OUTRAGED

Sirs:

Recently I witnessed a bout between the Bruiser and Tiny Smith which both horrified and outraged me. After winning the match with a knee drop, Bruiser grabbed a lit cigarette from the timekeeper's desk and tried to burn out Smith's eyes.

I suggest that immediate steps be taken to prevent such inexcusable—and needless—violence.

FRED F. VALLONGO
Toledo, Ohio

BAN BRUISER!

Sirs:

Who must I contact to have the Bruiser banned from wrestling? Right now I'm so hopping mad that I'd take him on myself. Why do I feel so strongly about it? Listen: (continued on page 6)

THE MAGAZINE FOR WRESTLING FANS

Wrestling

REVUE

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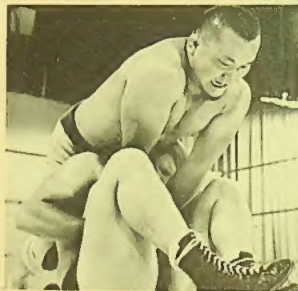
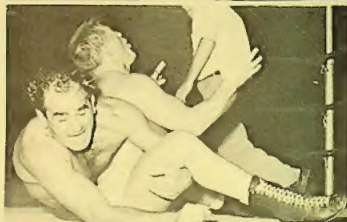
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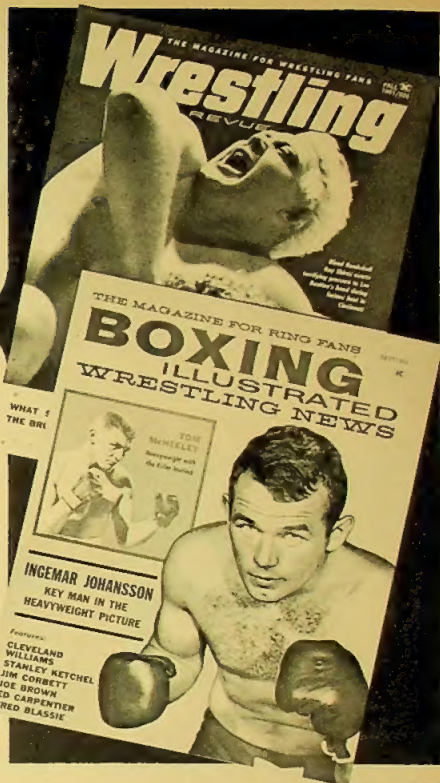
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READERS PROS AND CONS

(continued from page 3)

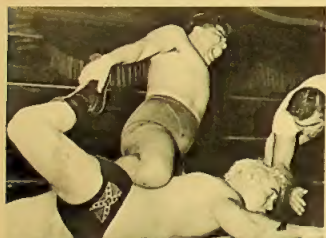
First of all, he stole Verne Gagne's championship belt. And I do mean stole. He ripped it from around Verne's waist and ran.

Secondly, he invented a new kind of torture he calls "The Double Bruiser Karate Clutch." This hold was designed not simply to defeat Bruiser's victims, but to murder them!

Thirdly, in that bout with Gagne (when Bruiser stole the belt), Verne was knocked senseless by an illegal blow and if Wilbur Snyder hadn't had sense enough to clear Verne's mouth, Gagne would have choked to death on his own tongue!

What I'm trying to say is that Bruiser **must** be stopped, and **now**. One girl alone can't do it, so I'm making this appeal to the millions of WRESTLING REVUE readers to help. Please do it before it's too late.

DIANE MARIE PAWLAK
Detroit, Mich.



BIG HEART'S
BOW & ARROW

MORE KILLER HOLDS

Sirs:

I enjoyed your story about wrestling's Killer Holds (Fall/61), but you omitted three of the most dangerous holds of all:

1. The Figure Four Grapevine
2. The Indian Deathlock
3. The Boston Crab

FRANK BANYAI
Toronto, Canada

Sirs:

I thoroughly enjoyed your article, "Wrestling's Killer Holds." However, I wish to suggest the addition of two more: The Figure Four leg lock used by Buddy Rogers, and The Texas Octopus used by Dickie Steinborn.

The article stated that Chief Big Heart is the exclusive user of the Bow and Arrow. I beg to differ with WR. Mark Lewin has won many a match with that same hold.

I think both BOXING ILLUSTRATED and WRESTLING REVUE are terrific magazines. My only regret is that WR is published but six times a year. I would like to see it a weekly, or at least a monthly. Everybody I speak to says the same thing. It is in a class by itself.

JONATHAN JANKUS
Queens Village, N.Y.

RAISE THE WHIP

Sirs:

I was quite shocked to see Whipper Watson not listed in your Official Wrestling Ratings. He is certainly one of the best in the world.

WILLIAM LEARNING
Happy Valley, Labrador

LOWER THE CHAMP

Sirs:

I was amazed to see Buddy Rogers rated the number one wrestler in the world. It's true that he is the champion, which is bad enough, but to put him on top of the list—never.

It is disillusioning to have a man who uses such foul tactics the world's champion, and it must have a violent effect on the many clean-cut young wrestlers who try so hard to bolster the sport in the public eye.

KATHY EDER
Huntington, N.Y.



STEVENS

STEVENS BOOSTERS

Sirs:

I think that U.S. Champion Ray Stevens deserves to be rated in the top ten of WR's Official World Ratings. He is without a doubt one of the finest wrestlers in the ring today. I think WR favors men who wrestle on the East Coast. Come on out to California and see some real stars, like Ray Stevens.

D. & D. JOHNS
San Francisco, Calif.

Sirs:

I must say that you don't give Ray Stevens the credit he deserves. Out here on the West Coast, Stevens is recognized as the U.S. champion. He holds victories over Buddy Rogers, Bill Melby, Bob Ellis, George Drake, Red Bastine and Antonino Rocca.

Surely a wrestler as capable as Stevens deserves WR's special treatment.

PAUL M. EDWARDS
Burlingame, Calif.



ROGERS

LONG LIVE THE KING

Sirs:

Your interview with Buddy Rogers (Dec./61) was absolutely superb. It's about time WR featured the champion in one of their unsurpassed interview-type articles.

I can only repeat what was said in WR's sister magazine **BOXING ILLUSTRATED**: "Long Live the King."

JEFFREY PAUL STILES
New York, N.Y.



CHENE—NOT ELLIS

ELLIS OR CHENE?

Sirs:

In the caption under the photo on pages 16 and 17 in the Dec./61 issue you say that the picture shows Bob Ellis slugging the Bruiser. Now I may be wrong, but it looks to me like that's Larry Chene throwing the big punch, not Bob Ellis. Please straighten me out.

DONNA H.
Richmond, Ind.

● We goofed. It was Chene.—ED.

REAL TITLE

Sirs:

If the title World Champion means the same to you as it means to me, then Buddy Rogers doesn't deserve it. Here in England we have many great wrestlers—better, in my opinion, than Rogers. For example: Willy Joyce (British and European champion), Bill Robinson and Norman Walsh. Please tell your Mister Rogers that if he wants to make it a real world championship he should come over to England and try defending it.

LAWRENCE BLACKMORE
Cheshire, England



CARPENTIER

KNOCK HIM SILLY

Sirs:

I take exception to Ed Carpentier's challenge to Floyd Patterson (Dec./61). If Patterson were allowed to wear skin-tight gloves, as Ed agreed he could, than Carpentier would lose his hundred grand he put up awful quick—Floyd would knock him silly.

WILLIAM BATES
Shooner, Wisconsin

PEPPER GOMEZ

Sirs:

Your article on Pepper Gomez (Dec./61) was great. The only trouble was that, in calling him one of the world's most popular wrestlers, you made a gross understatement. He's THE most popular!

We here in Texas think he's great—and if we think so, podner, than he must be!

SUSAN MURRAY
Lancaster, Texas



STARR

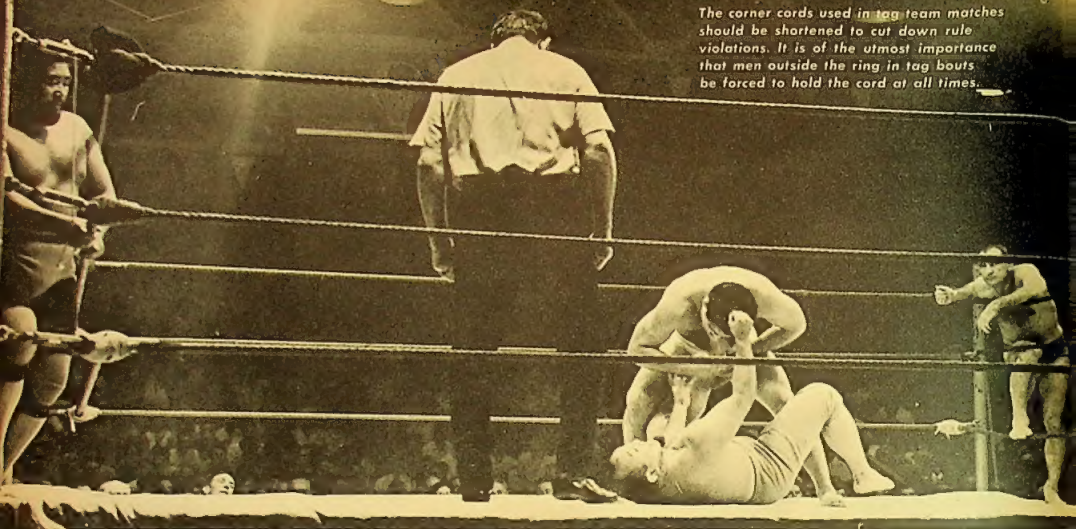
EVERYTHING'S GREAT BUT . . .

Sirs:

Everything about WR is great except for the tag team ratings. You forgot Ed Carpentier and Ricki Starr. There's none better.

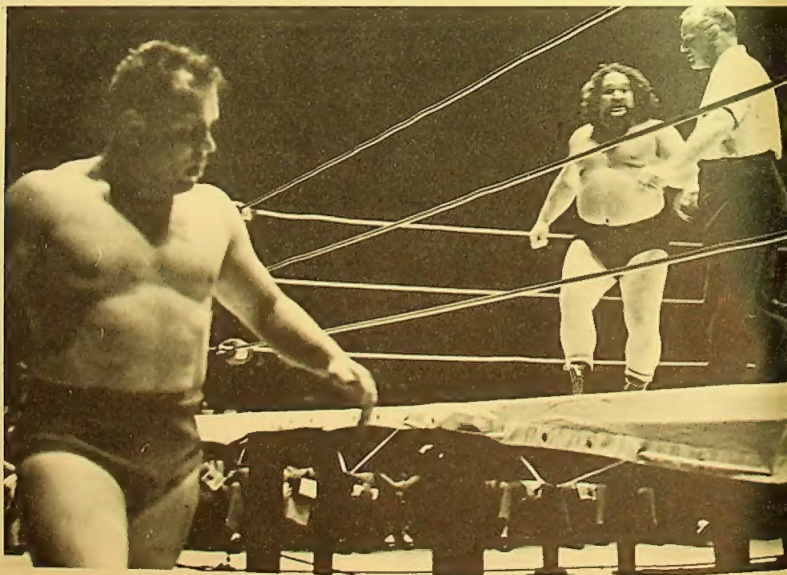
HERB SMITH
Los Angeles, Calif.

The corner cords used in tag-team matches should be shortened to cut down rule violations. It is of the utmost importance that men outside the ring in tag bouts be forced to hold the cord at all times.

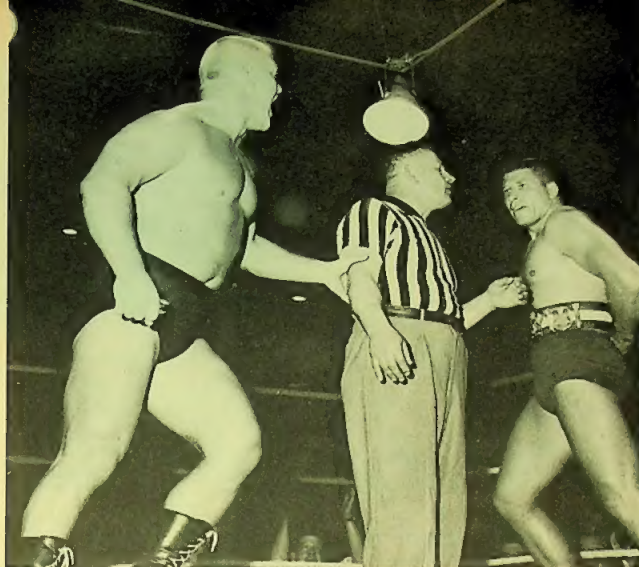


The rules and regulations governing The same wrestler can look like a champion when performing

Dick Beyer walks around ring shaking the cobwebs from his brain as Baron Gattoni awaits his return. WR suggests that wrestlers be forced to return to the ring within 15 seconds instead of twenty.



BY THE EDITORS



When a wrestler even touches a referee, as the Bruiser does in photo at left, he should be immediately disqualified. Wilbur Snyder is at right.

Wrestling vary to unbelievable degree from one state to another. Under one set of rules, and like a novice under another.

That's why we say... **WRESTLING MUST HAVE A UNIVERSAL SET OF RULES**

IN THE MID-1950's one of the favorite wrestling stars in Texas was Pepper Gomez, a fiery Californian of Mexican descent. One day Pepper was engaged in a typical rasslin' match, Texas Style. That is, after his opponent had fouled him unmercifully for fifteen minutes, Pepper did a little hell raising of his own. So the referee cautioned him and Pepper knocked the official clear out of the ring, to the cheers of the cowboys and cowgirls out front.

The referee, an ex-wrestler, bounced off the concrete floor, spun around and staggered back through the ropes. "Great goin',

Pepper," grinned the official, "that's the farthest anybody's tossed me this year!" The two shook hands, the crowd cheered and the bout went on to a finish.

After the bout, Pepper's lovely wife was waiting for him outside the dressing room. She thrust a telegram at him. It was an invitation to wrestle in New York's Madison Square Garden. It was the key to Gomez' becoming a national figure in wrestling. What makes it important in this particular story, is this:

A few weeks later Gomez made his long-awaited N. Y. debut against the notorious Karl Von

Hess, a creature left over from Hitler's suicide bunker. One of the shiftiest wrestlers alive—unfortunately—Von Hess is a thorn in the side of both his opponents and the officials.

But this time the mustachioed Teuton was the epitome of good sportsmanship to the referee, the commissioner and the ringsiders. Did he try to hurl Pepper out of the ring? He did not. He didn't even hide the corner of a razor blade in the hem of his trunks, or rub resin into Gomez' eyes. But what he did do was get a series of illegal choke holds on Pepper's throat and, when ordered



Mike Sharpe chases Johnny Rougeau out of ring. A disqualification was in order.



Notice how the referee cannot possibly see Antone "Ripper" Leone's choke hold on Dory Funk. This illustrates why we suggest two referees for every match.

to break the hold by the referee, rise and tread upon Pepper's undefended face. This annoyed the little Californian somewhat. So after ten minutes of it, he'd had enough.

He hauled off and slugged Von Hess right in the mouth. Down went Von Hess. Pepper leaped on him and slugged him again. Von Hess was groggy. It was at this point that we got our reason for this article. Or, one of the reasons, anyway.

The referee, an old hand at the game, touched Pepper lightly on the shoulder and said, "That's enough—you're supposed to uphold the principles of good sportsmanship. Don't lower yourself to his level!"

But Pepper, as he often does, let his Latin temperament get the better of him. He shook off the referee's hand—but hard. As it happened the official was balanced on the balls of his feet in a squatting position. Off balance now, he fell backward flat on his ample fanny. The crowd roared in appreciation.

Red-faced, the referee shouted, "You're disqualified!" He helped the dazed Von Hess to his feet and raised his hand in victory. The crowd nearly rioted. But the disqualification stood firm. Pep-

per Gomez, in fact, came close to being suspended for life in New York State. Only an eloquent plea by promoter Vince McMahon saved him.

Said McMahon, "This is a perfect example of something I've been hollering about for years. This man—one of the finest scientific wrestlers in the country, champion of Texas and the Pacific Coast—comes to New York and is disqualified. Why? Because he gently pushed a referee in the heat of battle. Well, it happens that where he is used to wrestling—in Texas—you can not only shove the referee, you can trip him, kick him, slug him and heave him over the ropes into the laps of the first row customers—who will probably throw him right back!

"In other words, Pepper Gomez is the victim of the state commissions, who refuse to get together and agree on one set of universal rules for wrestling. Believe me, if they had the same rules in Texas as they do in New York, Gomez would abide by them. And so would every other wrestler—or be suspended and fined! If this incident doesn't bring about the adoption of a universal set of rules by every one of the states, then wrestling isn't

what it should be!" concluded promoter McMahon.

Wrestling isn't what it should be because no such rules were adopted. Before a wrestler enters a new territory, he has to ask one of his friends, or the promoter, "What can I and can't I do?" Sometimes it isn't convenient or possible to find out. And often the wrestler gets into trouble—like Gomez did.

As might be expected, only the rougher type wrestlers are satisfied with things as they are. Take the Bruiser. He's happy to wrestle in places where the most gory type of mayhem is sanctioned. That fits his personality. Most others, however, favor universal rules. So why don't we have them? Why all the talk and no action?

They are going to be adopted. The talk is about finished and the action has begun. St. Louis promoter Sam Muchnick, the spark plug behind the action, has this to say: "We of the National Wrestling Alliance have realized for a long time the seriousness of the situation. Now we've got the answer. We're drafting a set of universal rules right now. As soon as they're approved by some states we believe the others will follow." (continued on page 67)

OFFICIAL WRESTLING RATINGS

A POLL OF LEADING PROMOTERS, NEWSMEN
AND THE WRESTLERS THEMSELVES
GUIDED US IN COMPILING THESE RATINGS.

MALE



- 1—BUDDY ROGERS
- 2—PAT O'CONNOR
- 3—VERNE GAGNE
- 4—FRED BLASSIE
- 5—EDOUARD CARPENTIER
- 6—ANTONINO ROCCA
- 7—THE BRUISER
- 8—BOB ELLIS
- 9—JOHNNY VALENTINE
- 10—KILLER KOWALSKI



FEMALE

- 1—JUNE BYERS
- 2—PENNY BANNER
- 3—LORRAINE JOHNSON
- 4—JUDY GRABLE
- 5—ROSE ROMAN
- 6—BONNIE WATSON
- 7—ADA ASH
- 8—CORA COMBS
- 9—KATHY STARR
- 10—JUDY GLOVER

TAG TEAMS



- 1—THE KANGAROOS
- 2—ANTONINO ROCCA and MIGUEL PEREZ
- 3—DON CURTIS and MARK LEWIN
- 4—BEARCAT WRIGHT and SWEET DADDY SIKI
- 5—THE VON BRAUNERS
- 6—THE GALLAGHERS
- 7—THE BRUNETTIS
- 8—THE VOLKOFFS
- 9—DICK STEINBORN and EDDIE GRAHAM
- 10—THE TORRES BROS.

He has the physique she
can't resist—Do You?



THE BARBELL EQUIPMENT

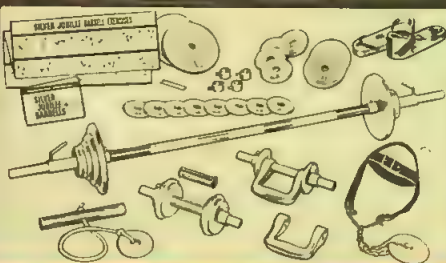
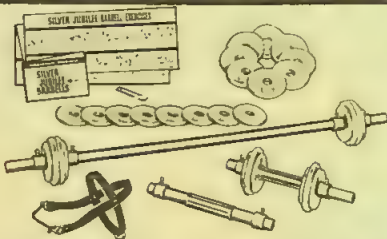
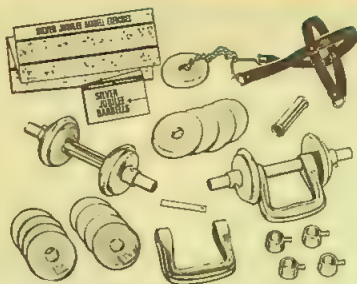
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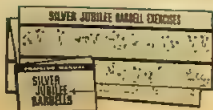
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DICK BEYER

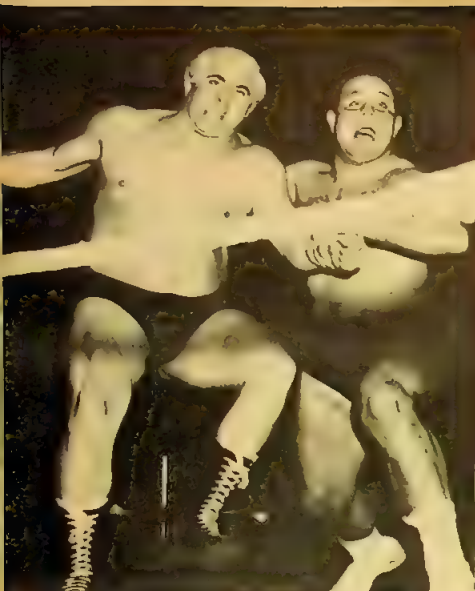
BY DAVE WARNER

Syracuse's All-American

Mike Gallagher, left, is about to be computed into ropes by Beyer.



Dick Beyer isn't known nationally because he has stuck more or less to wrestling around his native Syracuse, N. Y. But the people in the business know all about him, and they are predicting big things for the guy who can do everything.



Roy Shires, left, after roughing Dick up, gets a tasting of the Beyer wrath as he is shot across the ring headed for a clash with the brass ring post.

Right: Lee Henning is caught in Beyer's spectacular flying scissors during bout in Buffalo, N.Y., which Dick won.

Below: Dick with Syracuse University wrestling coach who played a major roll in making Dick a pro wrestler.



STAGING WRESTLING MATCHES is not the biggest headache confronting wrestling promoters. That's their job. "The trouble is in digging up new talent," they'll tell you. "The public wants fresh faces, guys with crowd appeal plus wrestling talent. In spite of all the thousands of husky young men pouring out of colleges and high schools each year, and in spite of the hundreds who want to become wrestlers, good wrestling material is hard to find."

There is very little "natural" talent around. Young guys who get tired of working as machinists or garbage collectors or coal heavers often read about the high incomes earned by some wrestlers, so they decide to take a fling at it. Usually, once somebody flings them out of the ring or they get their upper teeth shoved up into their palate, they go back to garbage collecting.

Thus, most of the "fresh faces" are coming out of college and A.A.U. wrestling ranks. Usually, if they have the fortitude to become stars on the amateur mat, they're adaptable enough to make it as professionals. The trouble is, most of these technically capable wrestlers fail to become genuine stars because they lack one thing: color. The fans don't remember them. So they grub along in the backwoods of wrestling—and they stick because they couldn't make any more money as "civilians." Bank examiners, accountants, copy editors, engineers—which is what they would be doing otherwise—fall into the middle income brackets; and don't experience the thrills and ego-building that comes with wrestling.

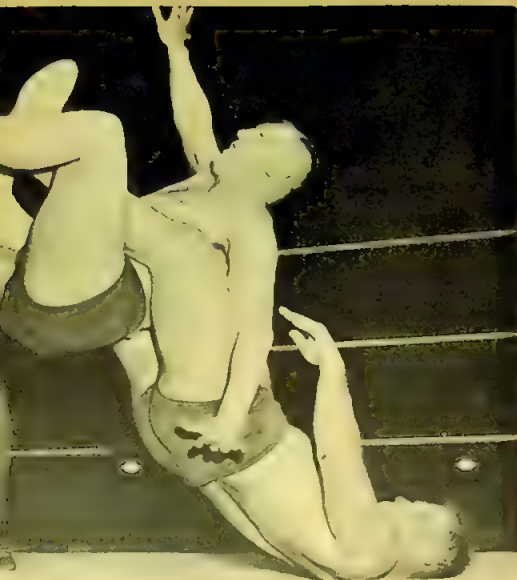
That's why the promoters—not to mention the editors of this magazine—are overjoyed when an authentic new star comes along to brighten our pages, and mat shows.

One such star is Dick Beyer. He is a product of the university of great athletes, Syracuse, in upper New York State. Beyer has degrees that qualify him to become a teacher; he is a pro football coach; he is an active radio commentator for sports events; he runs a construction firm in Buffalo; and he is qualified to hold down a lucrative public relations job.

But he's a wrestler most of all. The other jobs are simply hobbies "Until I need them." Well-paying hobbies that, together with his wrestling income, put Beyer into an enviable tax bracket. "Some day I'll retire to my farm in Akron, New York—82 acres I call the Ponderosa. But not for awhile."

Calling Dick Beyer—a compact blonde hero-type, weighing 230 and standing five-eleven—a "new star" is not inaccurate, although he's been around upstate New York and Canadian wrestling circuits for the past four years. He only lately reached "star" proportions—and as any bank teller can tell you, there's a big difference. Let's put it this way: a journeyman wrestler will make himself maybe \$15,000 to \$20,000. A star will make five to ten times that much.

Dick, like every other realistic wrestler, admits he's doing it for the money. Only a few of the independently wealthy veterans still wrestle for art's



sake.

Proof of Beyer's star status is the company he keeps. He has wrestled Lou Thesz, Dick Hutton, Pat O'Connor—all three former champions—Fritz Von Eric, Hans Schmidt, the Miller Brothers, the Lisowski, the Gallaghers, Wilbur Snyder and Verne Gagne—among others. In winning or losing, Beyer puts on a good show and suits his style to complement that of his opponent. Whenever said opponent happens to be an equally heroic type, the fans often don't know whom to root for. So quite frequently, Dick will adopt a more aggressive style, "—In the interests of the sport." This allows the crowd to cheer the more heroic hero.

"However," laughs Dick, "when I win, they cheer just as loud. It's a good feeling to know you can't get the fans to dislike you, no matter what you do."

They wouldn't dislike him around Syracuse or Buffalo even if he threw acid in his opponent's face. A while ago he was awarded a special trophy as the most popular wrestler ever to appear in Syracuse.

He has always been popular in his home territory—long before it became "his." He is the son of the late Dewey Beyer, a good bush league pitcher in the International League. Inheriting his father's athletic interest and natural ability, Dick starred in football, basketball, track and baseball at Buffalo's Seneca Vocational High School. A football scholarship got him to Syracuse. There he became captain of the team which won the Eastern Championship and an invitation to the Rose Bowl.

Joe McDaniel, the Syracuse wrestling coach,

heard from his fraternity brothers that Dick was a good roughhouse wrestler. He called him over to the gym one day after football practice.

"How about trying out for the wrestling team?" asked McDaniel. "It won't take much extra time and it'll keep you in good football shape."

Dick shrugged. Football was his game—but he was game to take a whack at something new. For kicks. McDaniel pointed to a big guy in the middle of the mat. "How about trying to pin him?" He asked Dick. "He's a beginner like yourself."

Dick said he'd try. He didn't quite do it, but he gave the "beginner" a roughhousing that didn't wear off for days. Only superior skill enabled his opponent to pin Dick at last.

McDaniel was delighted. "Meet our star heavy-weight," he said, and introduced Beyer to the "beginner," who said with amazement, "He wrestles like a pro—I mean rough. If he ever learns a few holds, he'd be a real moneymaker."

It was an accurate prophecy. In his junior and senior years Dick went to the finals in the Eastern Intercollegiate tournament. He won three AAU titles and twice was runnerup in national meets.

The future is bright for young Dick Beyer. Theoretically, he could suffer a succession of major disasters that would floor the average man, and still wind up with a good income. For example, he could go bankrupt (the construction business); he could get fired (as a sports announcer); he could flunk his teaching exams; he could slip a disc and be forced out of wrestling—and then he could go out and make \$20,000 a year in public relations!

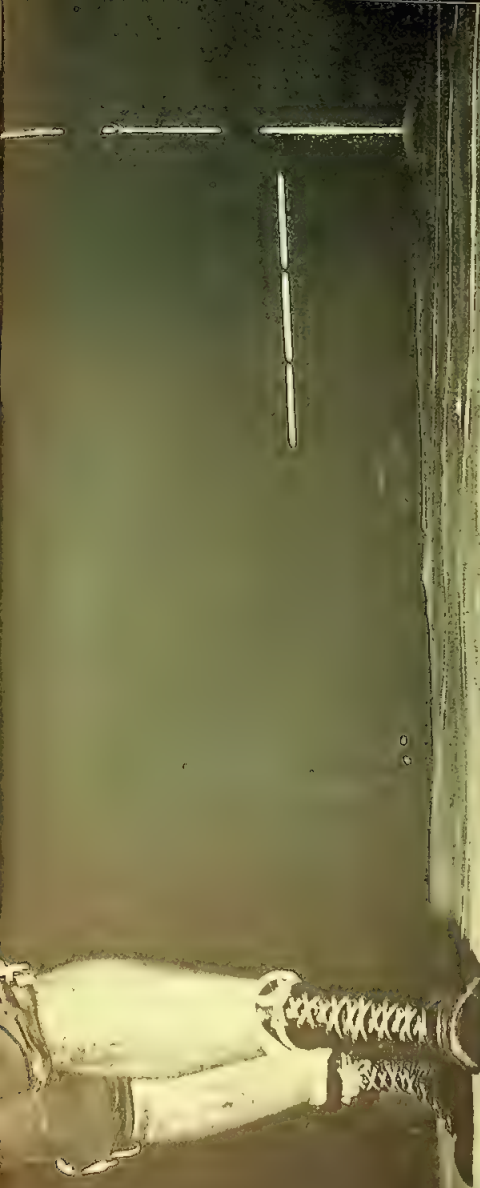
But the chances are that none of these things will happen to Beyer. The chances are that he will continue to forge higher and higher in his many fields, until he becomes a force to be reckoned with on the national scene. Even politics on the state or national level is open to him. And as a wrestler he can't possibly fail to achieve even more renown.

For Beyer is one of those "fresh faces" that come along once in a decade—and never fade. You'll be seeing a lot more of him. ●



The enormously popular Beyer is the constant target of autograph hunters everywhere he appears.





HOW TO FLOOR A MAT-ADOR

WHEN IT CAME TIME for Spanish-born Don de Cortez to decide whether to become a bullfighter or a wrestler, he found himself on the horns of a dilemma. At the time, wrestling in Europe was pretty much of a side-show, featuring little more than clowns, freaks and gimmicks galore. Bullfighting, on the other hand, was respected as an art and a dignified profession.

"I didn't," laughs de Cortez today, "know whether to fight the bull or throw it!" Luckily, he was only 21 at that time and had been settled in California for about ten years. He chose to stay in America and wrestle.

Actually, the frustrated matador finally got his chance

to face a "bull" of sorts when he met another wrestler by the name of Bull Sitka, an Alaskan who invaded Milwaukee a couple of years ago. The hilarious picture above shows the climax of that match. The bull tore into the toreador like a tornado. More accurately, he drop-kicked de Cortez right into the bull-pen; the terrific impact of the blow may be appreciated by noting the distortion of de Cortez' handsome features.

As usual, however, the Spanish Don returned to win handily, rendering the Bull into 220 pounds of rump roast. The bout is forgotten—but we think the picture will live forever.

A MISS- MATCH TO REMEMBER



Rose Roman, left, and Lorraine Johnson retreat to different parts of ring after receiving instructions (see facing page).

BY BOB LUCE

WHAT CATAclySMIC disaster took place in Milwaukee on a crisp October night in 1956?

Did a night foreman at the Schlitz Brewery forget to turn off a spigot and let three million gallons of golden brew flow into Lake Michigan? No.

Did the Braves play in their first World Series and get clobbered by the Yankees? No.

Did Verne Gagne get beat by

Wilbur Snyder in another futile attempt to regain the world title? No.

No, indeed—any of these things would have been festive occasions by comparison with what actually did happen: For on that October evening 5 years ago, five of America's finest girl wrestlers were crammed into a single padded ring and ordered to come out fighting. In other words, one of recent his-

tory's most memorable battle royals occurred at Milwaukee's County Stadium, and it took the groundskeepers all winter long to get the infield back in shape for the next ball season.

The object of a battle royal, as you probably know, is to get five or more wrestlers into a ring all at once—and out again one at a time. The last one on his—or her—feet is the winner.

This particular match was great for a number of reasons—and not just because each individual wrestler was great. They contained within themselves several feuds and grudges, all of which erupted furiously once they were unleashed; and each was determined to be the eventual victor—there was no cooperation or talk of You-help-me-and-I'll-help-you. Each girl tried her level best against all her opponents, and none showed the slightest mercy toward another.

As a result, two of the girls suffered serious injuries, all were badly shaken; hysteria gripped many of the more emotional fans among the 10,000 who witnessed the spectacle; and four of them required the aid of the pulmotor squad.

The girls who participated in this pentagonal Armageddon were, in order of disappearance: Raymonde Coty, Lorraine Johnson, Ramona TeSelle, Rose Roman—and the all-conquering Ada Ash. When they assembled in the ring to be announced and briefed, it didn't seem possible that so lovely a quintet could generate such mayhem and orbital energy as was to come. Not that any of the ladies could have doubled for a Rockette or a Latin Quarter showgirl—let's face it—but com-

pared to wrestlers such as Killer Kowalski or Hard-Boiled Hagerty, these kids look like Alices in Blunderland.

The affair started off innocently enough when Ada Ash, a real Amazon, got a headlock on Raymonde Coty and nearly sent her into oblivion in the first minute. Meanwhile Lorraine Johnson did pretty much the same to Romona TeSelle. Then, although neither planned it, both Ash and Johnson turned on Coty and catapulted her out of the ring feet first. She sort of slid into second base—and was thumbed out by the "umpires." Since Coty was wrestling in her nude feet, she didn't scrape up the infield much.

Then, just as Johnson was chortling over the ease with which she and Ash had ousted Coty, she was met by a backhand smash in her midsection—and the

next thing she knew Ada had sent her sprawling over the apron and onto the turf. An instant later her misery was doubled as TeSelle came hurtling out of the ring on top of her. Both were badly bruised.

"Three down—one to go!" screamed the redoubtable Ash, and for the next ten minutes she and pretty Rose Roman spit, scratched and kicked like a couple of hungry tigresses with their tails stapled together.

The inevitable came when Ada managed to wriggle into her specialty, a scapula-cracking full nelson, which ended the match and came close to ending Rosie for good.

As the referee hoisted her dainty hand aloft, Ada was heard to murmur gleefully, "Who could Ash for anything more?"

Certainly not the fans.

Instructions before the battle. Left to right: Rose Roman, Lorraine Johnson, Ramona TeSelle, Ada Ash (partly shown) and Raymonde Coty.



(see next page)

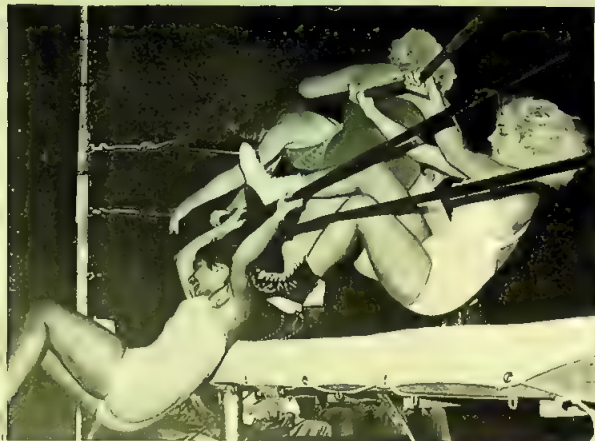
***Toss five hefty young
females into a ring.
Tell them that the last
one standing
is the winner.
Clang a bell, then sit back
and enjoy the fun.***

Below: Low angle view of ring captures some of the bizarre action in this sensational and very unusual five girl Battle Royal. Here three of the women gang up on Ramona TeSelle, on floor at extreme left. Lorraine Johnson, at right, clears the cobwebs from her brain after being slugged by Ada Ash.



Bell rings and the fury begins. At left Ada Ash has headlock on Raymonde Coty while at right Lorraine Johnson grabs at Ramona TeSelle's kicking leg.





Lanky Raymonde Coty is the first girl to be eliminated as she is battered from the ring by Johnson. Time of elimination: three minutes 28 seconds



Coty, dazed and cut under the eye, is led away by a sympathetic spectator to cheers of crowd.

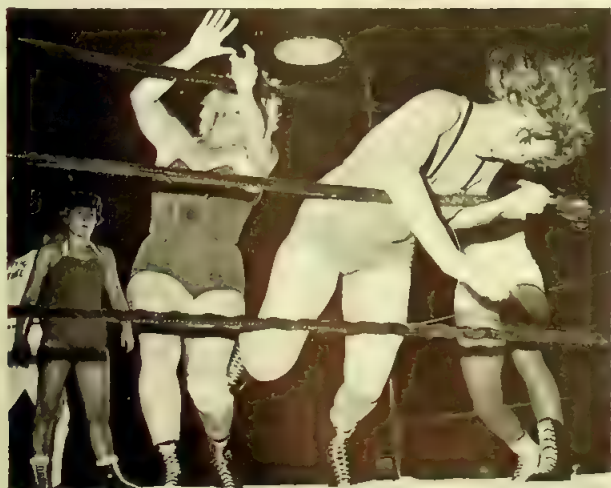




TeSelle lashes out at Johnson's hair while in background Rose Roman, left, slugs it out with tough and hefty Ada Ash.



Right: TeSelle is caught in the middle as Johnson, white suit, and Ash attack her from both ends. Rose Roman, meanwhile, goes to work on Johnson from behind.



TeSelle goes flying toward the ropes on her way to the cement floor below and is the second girl to be eliminated. Ada Ash, bandage on knee, was responsible.

(continued)

FIVE-GIRL BATTLE ROYAL

Ash is warned by the referee to break strangle hold she has on Rose Roman. But Ada denied it was a strangle and held on tightly until threatened with disqualification. As bout progressed it became more and more evident that Ash was the strongest girl in the ring, and the most experienced.





Rosa Roman jolts tough Ada Ash with perfect drop kick in an attempt to set her up for the kill. But although stunned, Ada was far from finished (See below).



Above: Roman, on floor, cannot continue and Ada Ash is winner. Left: After Johnson was eliminated, Ash, top, and Roman, battled it out for ultimate victory. With a crushing series of headlocks and forearm smashes, Ada weakened Rose and finished her off with three flying tackles to end the wildest girl match of all time.

NOT SO LONG AGO

Remember the FARGOS?

They were superb
performers, both
individually and
as a team.

But what made
them world famous

was their

act.

They were

the FARGOS.





A snarling Dan Fargo is jeered by irate fans even before he reaches the ring. His brother Jackie, not shown, followed Dan down the aisle shortly afterward and was bombarded with the same verbal abuse.

SOMETHING IS MISSING from the wrestling scene — and it's too bad. It vanished when the Fargo Brothers broke up a couple of years ago. What was it? The most eye-catching, hilarious, revolting, exciting and altogether indescribable prologue ever perpetrated on a wrestling crowd!

If you were ever present at a match featuring the platinum blonde, bulky Fargo Brothers, you doubtless remember the opening — the pre-bout shenanigans — more than the match itself. For those who hate the clownish aspects of wrestling, it was positively nauseating. To the realists,

however, those who realize that modern wrestling must contain a generous portion of showmanship, the Fargo prologue was a beneficial tonic for all ills. Laughter is good for the body and soul, which is exactly what these homely egomaniacs always provided with their shimmering entrance.

Do you remember how they stalked down the aisle from their dressing room to the ear drum-blasting chorus of boos? And how they strode into the ring clad in the most outrageous sequined leotards ever devised, capped by black toppers cocked arrogantly

over the eye? Remember their strut, an exaggeration of the infuriating walk developed by Danny McShane and Buddy Rogers? And how they used it to whip the crowd into a frenzy? Then how they would slowly peel their outer leotards — they wore two each — from their squirming, sinuous bodies while their opponents, the referee, the commissioners and the crowd urged them to hurry it up?

And then, do you remember how, once they started to wrestle, they proved to be daring, spectacular and rugged?

They were quite a show, those

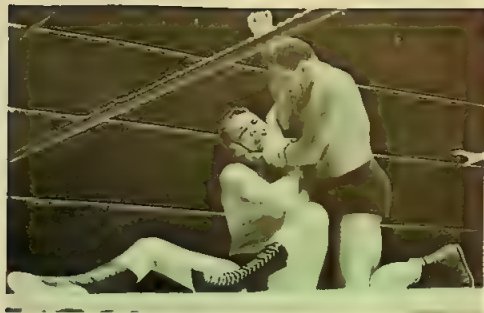


The three photos at right vividly illustrate part of the Fargo's hilarious pre-bout routine. Note how Don struts, bumps and grinds and, even though the fans do hoot and howl, they really appreciate it as a rare form of entertainment.

Infuriated by the Fargo's pre-bout antics, Billy Darnell streaked across the ring and delivered a perfect drop kick squarely into Don Fargo's body even before Don could get off his leopard.

Fargos, Don and Jack. They used the qualities of arrogance, brutishness and an exaggerated femininity to pack arenas from coast to coast. The customers, while trying to hate the Brothers, loved what they saw . . . and asked for more. It was a sad day when the boys split up, because of personal differences. But they're old pros and still doing well as singles or teamed with others. But they still hear the clamor for their return as the Fabulous Fargos. Someday they may heed the call. Then we'll again be treated to the most riotous prologues in mat history. ●





Billy squirms with pain as Fred Atkins exerts maximum pressure to choke hold. But Zabyszko rebounded to win.

Billy is a handsome, well-spoken youth. A typical hero-type on the surface, but with a burning urge that keeps driving him up, up, up.

BILLY ZABYSZKO

Young Man In A Hurry

"WATCH ME GIVE IT ta that punk kid!" snorted a barrel-chested giant of a man with a bowie knife in his fist. The man with the knife was standing on one side of a huge truck piled high with logs weighing two tons apiece — and held in place by taunted stretched manila ropes.

"That punk kid," was a 15-year-old boy named Bill Zabyszko — who stood 6'1" — weighed 134 lbs. — and had the strength and stamina of a dried corn stalk. Standing on the other side of the truck Bill was unaware that the man with the knife — to the muffled glee of his friends — was sawing his way thru one of the manila ropes.

The strands of rope untwined — snapping under its burden, the rope whirled through the air landing with a savage bull whip crack inches from where Bill stood. Thrown to the ground by the shock, the gangling youth was now faced with the guffaws and belly laughs of the man who'd cut the rope and his friends . . .

. . . The rope cutting was the climax of a series of incidents: Bill Zabyszko, on summer vacation, had left his father's farm

on the outskirts of Montreal and gone to work at a Winnipeg logging camp. The man with the bowie knife — called Big Red — was the camp bully. Though scrawny physically, Zabyszko had plenty of spunk. And that spunk incurred the wrath of Big Red who'd grown used to having the camp men cater to him in slave-like fashion . . .

. . . Raising himself to his feet, Bill began punching away at Big Red. But the Gargantuan lumberjack merely laughed off the boy's harmless pelts — then he stopped laughing and smashed the tip of his boot into Zabyszko's groin and followed it with a roundhouse right to the jaw.

Pouring blood from a mashed mouth, Bill crumbled to the ground — and left the camp in shame.

"I felt like sticking my head in an oven and turning on the gas"; confesses Bill, "and I knew the only way I'd get my self-respect back would be to whip Big Red."

So he began working out in a Montreal gym. Standing in front of a mirror, he would strain and grunt while lifting barbells and plying wall pulleys — always re-

membering the scornful laughing face of Big Red.

After two months a thin cord of muscle developed on Billy's pipe-stem arms. The cord thickened as heavier and heavier weights were added to his workout regimen. The following summer — at 6'3" 210 lbs. — Bill Zabyszko headed back to Winnipeg; a thick slab of muscle packed on each shoulder and flowing down into even thicker muscles of his arms and wrists.

"Hi, Big Red!" shouted Bill as he entered the camp. Red turned toward the muscular avenger — a look of perplexity on his crude, stupid face. "Say" he snorted, "ain't you that kid I?" he never finished the sentence — Bill rammed his now beefy fist into Big Red's gaping mouth — a knee shot deep into his belly — a judo chop to the back of the neck — and it was all over.

"I had to go to a doctor"; relates Bill, "to get the chunks of that bum's teeth out of my knuckles — from what I hear, Big Red is still wearing a neck brace.

"I learned a great lesson in that camp"; Bill said as he readied himself in New York's Sunnyside

Arena dressing room for his match with Miguel Torres, "if I have to fight dirty to win I'll fight dirtier than two pigs in a tar pit.

"Don't get me wrong—if my opponent keeps his punches up, I'll follow suit—but the minute he tries any cute tricks, I'll start stomping."

Why did 23-year-old Bill Zabszko, who now weighs 237 lbs., become a wrestler? "I can answer that question in one word," he replied, "—money! I hope to be married someday and I want enough dough to raise a family in style.

"That's why it's so important to win—we wrestlers sign contracts guaranteeing us a certain percentage of the gate. But the man who wins the match sometimes receives an extra percentage for his victory—and that means more money."

His attitude toward the fans? "Wrestling fans are like large groups of people anywhere—most of them good Joes, some of them real stinkers," Billy snorted. "Once, when I was wrestling Gorgeous George in Ontario, a frail looking old lady smacked me over the head with her handbag as I was leaving the ring—the handbag had a brick in it and the doctor took 11 stitches to seal closed my skull.

"When I get a little time to myself I like to beat it down to a private fishing spot I've rented in New Jersey—away from that screaming crowd. I like solitude."

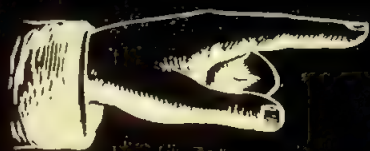
As he spoke, Bill splashed his herculean physique with cologne: "I sweat a lot in the ring," he related with a chuckle, "and I wouldn't want to offend the fans—get me?"

His daily routine? "I must travel a thousand miles a week to keep engagements," says Bill, "I keep a set of barbells and gym equipment in the back of my station wagon—do most of my exercising in hotel rooms."

What does he do in his dressing room before a match? "I play solitaire," he states, "—it calms my nerves." •



WRESTLING REVUE'S POPULARITY POLL



*Here's Your Opportunity
to*

*SELECT AMERICA'S
MOST POPULAR
MAT STARS*



WE KNOW who the **best** wrestlers are in America.

WE KNOW who the big **winners** are. And we know the ones who are most sought after by promoters.

WE HAVE a good idea which are the big guns in any given area. For instance, Verne Gagne is real big around Minneapolis; Wilbur Snyder and Killer Kowalski are big in the mid-west; Fred Blassie and Ray Stevens are kings on the West Coast; while in the South there are such stars as Bob Geigel, Ray Gunkel and Eddie Graham. Each area has its top-rated performers who draw the big crowds and make pro wrestling live.

BUT—of the 600 or so full-time professional wrestlers currently active around the U.S., only a handful are **nationally** known. These are the super-stars, the athletes who have that peculiar quality that makes people love them—or hate them—with a devotion even greater than the devotion they reserve for their closest friends.



IT IS the purpose of WRESTLING REVUE'S POPULARITY POLL to determine who are wrestling's super-stars, those giants of the mat whose names are known not only in New York and Rahway, New Jersey, but also in San Francisco and Split Lip, Nevada.

There is only one way to find out, and that is to ask **you**, the fans. We're asking you. Because we know you're as interested in the fascinating answers as we are. You have your favorites; you have your **big** favorite, the most wonderful wrestler of them all—in your opinion. Does your opinion stack up alongside that of others?

HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO FIND OUT. Here's your chance to help **decide** who is America's top wrestler in terms of popularity. We've supplied a ballot for you to fill in, numbering the wrestlers according to your preference from one to ten.

Why only ten choices—and why the particular ten listed on the ballot? **WRESTLING REVUE**, which is acknowledged to be the Voice of World Wrestling by wrestlers, promoters and fans alike, receives a minimum of 2,000 letters each week. On a wall chart we have listed the most active wrestlers, those you read about in these pages. Whenever we get a letter about a particular wrestler, we place an "X" next to his name. The more "X's," the more popular we know that wrestler to be.

Currently, we know who the **Ten** most popular wrestlers are, on the basis of our system. Then why, you ask, can't we alone determine their popularity **rating**, and decide the most popular of all?

It happens that not everybody who is interested in wrestling writes letters. If they did, we would have an avalanche of letters flooding our offices each week. The 2,000 fans who do write are the hard core of wrestling fandom—but they are **not** enough to determine the national popularity of a wrestler since they write mainly about their local favorites.

Our interest is national. So we offer you the ten regional favorites, the favorites in your own locality, and now give you the chance to decide which you like best of all.

We realize that the most ballots will come from the most populated parts of the country—which would give the local favorites in those localities an edge. To counteract this, we have enlisted the aid of a large TV rating firm who will determine the proper percentage vs. population ratio, to insure fairness.

NOW GO TO IT—even as you vote for your favorite political candidate, now vote for your favorite wrestler. And even as your political vote is a boost for democracy, helping to keep your country strong, so the ballot you cast in this "election" is a boost for your favorite sport.



WRESTLING REVUE'S POPULARITY POLL

★ OFFICIAL RULES ★

- 1 In the "rating" squares provided next to each candidate's name, number your choices as follows: No. 1 will be your favorite wrestler, No. 2 will be your next favorite, and so on to No. 10. (Facsimile form may be used.)
- 2 All squares must be numbered.
- 3 In twenty-five (25) words or less, tell why your No. 1 choice should be the most popular wrestler in America (best reasons will be published in a future issue of WRESTLING REVUE).
- 4 All ballots must be postmarked no later than January 19, 1962.
- 5 Mail ballots to: Popularity Editor, WRESTLING REVUE, 545 Fifth Avenue, New York 17, N. Y.

★ OFFICIAL BALLOT ★

 A Verne Gagne RATING <input type="text"/>	 B Johnny Valentine RATING <input type="text"/>	 C Wilbur Snyder RATING <input type="text"/>	 D Yukon Eric RATING <input type="text"/>
 E Pepper Gomez RATING <input type="text"/>	 F Larry Chene RATING <input type="text"/>	 G Pat O'Connor RATING <input type="text"/>	 H Bobo Brazil RATING <input type="text"/>

My No. 1 Choice is

Because: (25 words or less)

Your Name

Your Address

Your Age

Your City

Zone State

Signed

THE VIOLENT WORLD OF BIG BILL MILLER

Tough guys are common in the bizarre world of pro wrestling. But Big Bill is the most uncommon tough guy of all

BY DAVID HART

Bob Ellis, the enormously popular Texan, sinks under impact of Miller's mighty fist. Ellis admits that Big Bill is probably the toughest man he has ever faced in the ring.



IT WAS A FREAKISH accident—and a heart-rending one. The horse van was on its way from the Long Island stud farm to Aqueduct. When it skidded into a ditch the side of the trailer ripped off. The big mare inside leaped out, unhurt—and sprang across the wreckage. Panicky, she landed upright on a four-by-four timber which crossed the ditch. Now she was hung up, straddling the timber, her hind legs a few inches off the ground, her entire weight supported by only her chest and belly.

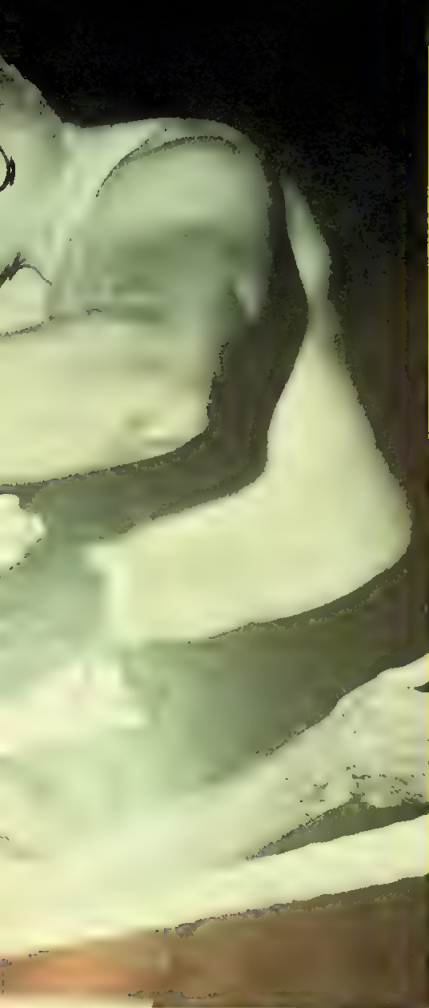
The driver and the state cops were helpless to aid the stricken animal. "We'll have to get a crane and a sling and lift her off," said the cops, as they

headed for their radio car.

"By the time they get here," said the horse's trainer, "poor Gilda will kick herself to death. Either that or she'll split herself from crotch to brisket."

Cars were beginning to stop on all sides now and the moans and sighs of animal lovers were piteous to hear. But nobody had any suggestions. It looked as though a high-priced horse was about to die in agony—and with dozens of people looking on, unable to help.

Then a rich red Cadillac rolled to a halt. From it a man—too big to fit into anything but a Caddie—



lepped and strode up to the scene of the disaster. His steel-grey eyes took in the situation at once. The others at the scene became quiet, sensing that a leader of men had arrived. Later, one of the cops said, "I don't know what it was—I just felt that this guy would know what to do."

He did know. The big man took off his coat, and through a skin-tight sport shirt bulged the biggest set of muscles the crowd had ever seen. He took the terrified horse's head in his huge arms and murmured soothing words into its ear. Like magic the beast ceased to tremble, and for a moment lay relaxed in its bizarre trap.

Then the big fellow, who appeared to be in his late twenties, tested the footing of the ground around the horse. The crowd, tense, watched, wondering, expectant. And as they drew in their breath noisily, he reached down, seized one end of the timber in both hands and lifted it a foot off the ground! Then, taking tiny side steps, he moved about two feet over and into the ditch. When he put the timber down, with the horse upon it, she was able to get both feet onto the ground. Now he simply pulled the big plank out from under the animal—and she was free!

A cheer rose from the small crowd, and as they pressed forward to congratulate him, the hero strode rapidly away, entered his Caddie and off. No one had learned his name.

Then one of the cops, a wrestling fan, snapped his fingers. "Well, I'll be darned! Y'know who that was?—one of the worst TV villains, Big Bill Miller!"

His co-driver nodded. "Hell, yes—and I thought all the time he was a no-good rat who hated everything and everybody!"

"Well, he sure likes animals, even if he does hate people."

This incident, dramatic though it was, serves mostly to point up three things about Bill Miller; the fact that he is one of the strongest men in the world; he is a do-er, not a talker, who commands instant respect from his fellow men, and he does indeed like animals. Not that he hates people; he just likes animals better.

That's why he's a veterinarian. That's right—William Miller, a dozen years ago, got his doctorate in veterinary at Ohio State University. However, due to his other activities at college, Bill rarely gets a chance to use his training these days—except to lift horses out of ditches or to set an occasional fractured fibula on a neighbor's dog.

What else did he do at college? He led the Buckeye State's mat squad into the finals of the Big 10 wrestling championships after running roughshod over the opposition. But Miller lost in the finals to a young senior from the University of Minnesota named Verne Gagne! Which was no disgrace. At the time—1949—Bill was only a sophomore in his first year of football and wrestling competition. And Gagne is recognized as having been the very best college wrestler of his era.

What else did Bill Miller do at Ohio State? Well, he threw the discus 167'4" to win that event in the Big 10 Track Meet. He played first string tackle on the great 1950 OS football team, and helped them crush U.S.C. in the Rose Bowl.

But that doesn't have a direct bearing on why Miller never got to work on horses—except at the pari-mutuel window—after graduation. The direct reason is that Bill was so good at wrestling that he turned pro right away. At 6 feet, 285 pounds, plus his school experience, he would have been foolish to go into anything other than wrestling or pro football. As a top horse doctor he might make ten to fifteen thousand a year. As a wrestler, he now pays taxes on about \$50,000 yearly, give

(continued on page 38)





GUY and JOE BRUNETTI

WRESTLING REVUE'S PIN UP SERIES / NUMBER 5

(continued from page 35)

or take the price of a small cab cruiser.

Miller is so ideally suited to wrestling that it seldom occurs to reporters to ask him whether he wanted to do anything else as a boy. They assume that the veterinary bit was just an easy major subject so that Bill could make sure of graduation—and maybe have something to fall back on if pro wrestling didn't work out.

"But that's all wrong," says huge, crew-cut, good-looking Bill Miller. "—I really wanted to be a vet—or work with animals one way or the other. Even now, with a little brushing up, I could open a practice. And if I decide to quit the ring before I'm fifty, I will."

The chances are he won't quit wrestling until he's at least sixty. He has the stamina to go that long, and he's picking up new mat lore with every match. The first one took place in 1951, which means a lot of mat lore.

The way he became a pro shows—as does everything he does—his depth of character. The young man walked into promoter Al Haft's Columbus, Ohio, office ten years ago and after introducing himself as a wrestler from Ohio State, said, "I want to wrestle for money."

Haft, used to big football stars who "want to wrestle for money," grinned and said, "Listen, sonny," "if I never heard of you, you can't be much of a wrestler."

Big Bill nearly choked under his wool sweater with the big "O" on the chest. "I can't help it if you don't get around," he spluttered. "Let me go on the practice mat against anybody you want to name. Then you'll hear of me!"

Haft burst into laughter. It was time to quit kidding the kid. "Sure, Bill, I've heard of you all right. If you hadn't come to me first, I'd have gone to you. We're always looking for big men—good big men—and I think you're both. Let's talk it over." He shoved out his hand and felt it engulfed by a relieved Bill Miller.

They talked it over and it resulted in a \$10,000 contract. William Miller became Big Bill Miller, wrestler.

But not the Big Bill Miller who millions of mat fans were to know a few years later as one of the toughest, roughest sadists in the ring. No, the early Bill Miller was a likable, smiling sportsman who used all the science he had learned in college—plus the professional trickery taught to him by Haft.

It didn't work out. Inside of six months Big Bill learned a lot of wrestling, yes, but he also learned something else. Size alone—and size coupled with science—are not enough to make it big in big-time wrestling. It takes polish, which can come only with experience.

He learned something else. He learned that whenever he took it easy and wrestled real clean against tough guys, they ridiculed his enormous size and punished him more. One day in 1954, he met with veteran star The Great Scott, and overnight the career of Bill Miller took a dramatic turn. A turn



Miller easily lifts the 240-pound Bob Ellis to his shoulders in his version of the Back-Breaker, a submission hold when applied by Big Bill. Here Ellis concedes the fall to Miller.

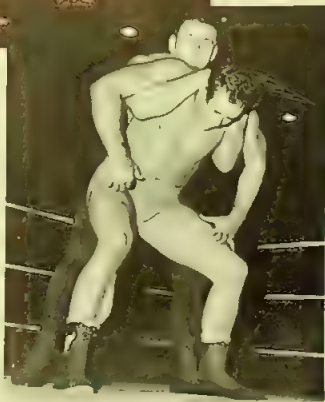
Right: Ellis storms to the attack to begin second fall, sends Miller flying across ring with this punishing Fano lift. Here Bob, of course, had the crowd cheering for him all the way.

Below: After Miller flipped Ellis out of the ring, Bob rolled out after him, grabbed him in a headlock and s crashing head first into the iron siding of the ring.





Miller's pet hold, although he will not admit it, is the full nelson, which he holds here on Ellis. Biob suffered for about three minutes before breaking free.



for the worse, in the opinion of sports-loving mat fans. For Bill Miller, it was the best thing that could have happened.

He got clobbered. Creamed. Massacred. When Great Scott finished with Miller, Bill was taken to a hospital, sent to surgery where he got 14 stitches sewed into his scalp, and remained to convalesce for three days.

"It doesn't pay," declared the bandaged wrestler upon emerging from the hospital. "It doesn't pay to be a nice guy. From now on they're going to see something new—a mean Bill Miller! And I'm not kidding."

He sure wasn't. Since that near-tragic incident seven years ago, Big Bill Miller, both alone and in company with his tag team partner-brother, Ed, has grown to be one of America's most feared bruisers. He will do anything to win a match—or become disqualified when he feels he's losing. Disqualification for a hero is a cause for embarrassment and self-blame; but for villains like Miller it can't possibly hurt their record.

"It was tough at first," admits Bill today. "Turning mean, I mean. Here I'd built up a following in the Midwest, people knew me as a nice guy. I liked them and they liked me. But then, without explaining what happened—how could I?—I turned completely. They couldn't understand it. I felt as though I had let them down."

But Bill discovered one thing early. As a villain he was able to draw more of a gate than as a hero. The people liked him less—but they liked to see him more. They wanted to see him get whipped. They wanted him to get paid back for having changed.

It didn't happen too often. For by now Bill was a fine wrestler. With his science and speed—he is unbelievably fast for such a big man—coupled with burning aggressiveness, he was all but unbeatable. It gained him a far wider audience that now ranges across the country, reaches into Canada and—if the air waves go that far—to the Moon.

Bill wants it known that it's only when he's in or near a wrestling ring that he's the bestial type. One time half a million TV viewers saw him, when interviewed by Ray Morgan, reach out and scatter a pile of fan mail across the auditorium. It was a vicious act and announcer Morgan had no comeback. Later we asked Miller about it.

"No, I'm not ashamed, really," he said, after some thought. "In order for me to do the things I do in the ring, I can't go in cold. I can't go in feeling like a nice guy. I've got to go in feeling mean and rotten. So on the way from the dressing room to the ring I work myself up. Sometimes it starts as soon as I leave for the arena. That way, when I meet my opponent, I am genuinely in a bad mood. For all intents and purposes, I am as foul and non-virtuous as any of the other villains you see in the ring. And it all adds up to the same result."

It adds up to about fifty grand a year. And for that kind of money, even the great Doctor Schweitzer might consider taking up a wrestling career.

After all, Doctor William Miller did it. ●

Poffo with his famous partner-in-crime Bronko Lubich after a wild bout in Detroit TV Studio Zebra striped trunks are an original Poffo creation.



A hundred thousand fans say: "WE GO FOR POFFO!"

And to Angelo Poffo goes WR's First Wrestler Of The Month Award

BY HAL HENNESEY



The deceptively strong Poffo forces enormously powerful Yukon Eric to break hold.

IN WRESTLING, failures are less than a dime a dozen. In 1960, 318 letters from athletes, truck drivers and football players flowed into the offices of **WRESTLING REVUE**, all with the same plaintive, wistful question: "Could I make good at professional wrestling?"

We answer each query—and our answer is not plaintive, wistful or even encouraging. We say: "Forget it." Why are we so callous and cold to the ambitions of these eager, struggling young men?

Because we figure that if one must write and ask us whether he should take up wrestling, than he doesn't want it badly enough. Anyone who truly vows to make wrestling a career isn't going to have any doubts about it! He's going to become a wrestler.

Whether he becomes a successful wrestler or not is another matter. Our statistics, over a period of years, reveal the tragic percentage of only two percent successes to 98 percent failures. This makes wrestling the toughest profession in the world, bar none.

That is why most stories you read in **WRESTLING REVUE** are success stories. Most of the wrestlers we write about have reached a point near or at the top. This is one of the most unusual—and inspiring—success stories of them all, the story of Angelo Poffo.

It begins in a warlike setting in 1945 at the San Diego naval base. On the after deck of a cruiser several hundred men were gathered,



Extraordinary showman Poffo does amusing maneuver while looking to crowd for sympathy after Eric clobbered him in the small of the back.



A few years ago, Poffo teamed up with tough Gypsy Joe to form a sensational tag team. Here they pose in dressing

and on the pier dozens more looked on at what was to become an important event. They were watching an eighteen-year-old sailor sitting on a gym mat. That's all.

The young man, muscular and handsome with dark Italian features, wasn't just sitting, actually. Sometimes he lay down flat on his back. He would lie down, then sit up, then lie down, then sit up, then lie down, then sit up—once every two and one-half seconds he performed the body manipulation.

He kept it up for four hours and ten minutes, and all the while the audience patiently watched in silence. From time to time some of the crowd would straggle away for a cup of coffee, only to return, fascinated, to continue watching the unbelievable display of strength, stamina and fortitude taking place on the sunlit deck of the ship.

Then, when the perspiring youth finally sat up for the last time and signaled that he was finished, the odds he performed the body manipulation was broken by a mighty cheer. And with good reason.

Angelo Poffo had set a new world record of 6,033 sit-ups. The press appreciated the feat by pub-

licizing it from coast to coast. Robert L. Ripley appreciated it by featuring Poffo's accomplishment in his syndicated "Believe It or Not" feature.

But perhaps the person who appreciated Poffo's feat more than anyone else in the world was the writer of this article. For at the San Antonio Aviation Cadet Center, on April 4, 1944—a year earlier—I had set a record of 5,500 sit-ups in the time of seven hours, three minutes. In doing so I lost seven pounds, a pound an hour. Poffo's record of 500 more sit-ups was accomplished in almost half the time.

Therefore, when I first heard of Angelo Poffo, the wrestler, ten years later, I decided that I would one day write his story, for we had something decidedly in common. At the time, in 1955, there wasn't much of a story to write—except for the sit-ups. For Angelo Poffo, six years ago, was what you might call a successful failure as a wrestler. He made a living, yes, but no one outside of his immediate area, the mid-Midwest, had ever heard of him. I had to wait.

I've waited five years, and the wait has been justified by what has happened in that period. Poffo, from a virtual unknown, has

soared skyward in popularity and critical acclaim as one of America's leading wrestlers. And now, what happened during that first phase of his career—from the Navy days until 1955—are important, since it forms the background to what he is today.

In the first place, the six-foot, 225-pounder, is one of the true intellectuals of the ring. It is possibly this that accounts for his early record of failure—mediocrity, rather. He is a graduate of Chicago's DePauw University, where he was an inter-collegiate chess champion and swimmer. One of the strangest sights around today's arenas is to see the burly Poffo, in a skin-tight sport shirt and crowned by a mop of crisp black hair that curls around his neck, in close combat with a scholarly-looking greybeard; their foreheads almost touching as they bend over a loaded chessboard balanced on a locker-room bench, they ignore the rude sounds of the athletes around them, lost in their game.

Poffo got into pro wrestling soon after graduating from De Pauw. There were other things he could have done and it is certain that he would have succeeded at any of them. However, this is a



room after a bout. Left to right: Joe's wife, Poffo, Bronko Lubich, Gypsy Joe.

man who planned every phase of his life with the painstaking accuracy of a calculating machine. He realized that, in the several fields for which he was intellectually fitted, he might earn a yearly \$15,000 at the end of ten years of grovelling. He could have taken up boxing, but top athletic ability is no sure guarantee of success in the prize ring. Poffo didn't care to waste three or four years ascertaining whether or not he had the other intangible qualities that go into the makeup of a heavyweight boxing champion—and he would settle for nothing less.

Wrestling was something else again. Deep inside, Angelo Poffo knew that he had what it took to become the best wrestler in the world.

In our interview recently—after we waxed nostalgic about our sit-up days—Poffo was asked why he took so long to get “started.” Why were his first five years notable for their virtual anonymity?

The chunky Poffo, now 31, never answers a question—no matter how many times it is asked, without deep consideration. He is like heavyweight boxing champion Floyd Patterson in this respect. Now he said: “For lack of a better

reason, let's give the right one. I had no goal. I had no incentive. I—” he thought awhile longer, “—I had no inner fire, the thing that means the difference between total success and partial success. I wanted to be good at my trade, sure, and I knew how to wrestle. But the extra spark that makes, say, a Killer Kowalski or a Ricki Starr—in me it was missing. And I didn't know how to light it.”

That's how he talks—and the way he talks is a tipoff to how he finally managed to “light the spark” that put him in the class of Kowalski and Starr. I put the question to him directly. But first I prefaced it with speculation.

“The big chance in your life came in 1955 or thereabouts, Angelo. Some reporters have said that it was your family, that caused you to embark on a ‘success’ campaign. You married in the early fifties and by 1955 you had started a family. Others have claimed that the big switch to the big time came when you took Bronko Lubich as your manager. Which was it—or was it something else entirely?”

Angelo shook his shaggy head, frowning thoughtfully. “Both were partly responsible, no doubt. I have to admit that my wife has been an inspiration to me—and certainly, when the kids came along I was determined that they would live decently and never want for anything. But what wrestler—what man—doesn't have the same feelings? No, that's not it altogether. And as for Bronko, I teamed up with him in 1956; there's no doubt but that, with him, I've climbed higher than I might have without him—faster, anyway. But other guys have taken on managers and valets and gimmicky helpers of all kinds. Some of them improved their position, others didn't. I had made up my mind to make it big long before Bronko came along. He just served as additional inspiration—the way a front-wheel drive on a car gives it more traction and pulling power.”

Okay, then—just what caused the new Angelo Poffo to rise, like the phoenix bird, from the ashes of the old, to fly higher than ever?

“Let's look at Poffo,” said

Poffo, “as he was late in 1954. I'd been wrestling for five years—first as a hero, and then, finding I wasn't getting anywhere, as a villain. Turning tough helped some. It was more natural to me—in the ring, anyway—to give vent to my real feelings. I'm a sort of introvert and if I couldn't have taken out my inner spite on my opponents, I might have taken it out on my family and friends. At first I was kind of sensitive about being booed and mobbed by the fans, who thought I was an S.O.B. But I'm adjustable enough to take it in stride. I'm not about to get any ulcers because people don't like me. The ones who count—my family and close acquaintances—know the real Poffo.

“By '55, knowing I hadn't made the full use of my potential, I sat down and had a long talk with myself. I know it sounds corny, but that's what I did. I took the car one day, told my wife I was going for a drive. She knew something serious was going on, but she didn't ask questions. She just wished me luck, as though I was going off on a long journey. And, in a way, that's what it was.”

Here Angelo paused again, for to relieve an important mental experience in your life means suffering a little of the same inner conflict that first caused it. He went on, “I drove out along the shore of Lake Michigan, above Chicago, and found a deserted, wild area that must have looked the same way a thousand years ago. I had to leave the car and walk a mile before I found what I wanted. Again it sounds corny, but I wanted to be alone with—well, nature—and with my own thoughts.”

I told him it didn't sound corny. It sounded honest and, coming from a guy who made his living as he did, brave.

He smiled thinly and continued. “I said to myself, while the wind blew off the Lake and a bunch of spiders built a web a few inches away, Angelo, make up your mind. You're at the crossroads. At 28, you've got to decide, are you going to keep on batting your brains out for ten grand a year for the next ten years—and then have to pick another job—or are you going to do something with your



Poffo is one of the few wrestlers who still wears expensive jackets into the ring. This one, made of gold spun satin and rhinestones, cost about \$700.

life, so that, at 35, you can really start to live?

"The answer was easy. Of course I decided that I was going to make it. In these days ten thousand a year is nothing for a wrestler. Traveling expenses alone take half of it, and who can live decently on \$100 a week? But—making a decision and making it stick are two different things.

"Now, I don't want to get overdramatic about this thing." Here Poffo laughed lightly. "But right then and there something big happened. Something little, but something big. I happened to be watching those damned spiders at the time. You know how a spider builds his web. He hangs down from a branch on the end of a filament of web and attaches it to a lower object. Then he climbs up and swings over to set a new strand. Okay. Now it happens that, if it weren't for the wind, which blows the spider from one object to another, he couldn't build that web!

"It's instinct that lets the little insect know he must depend on the wind to build his flytrap. And without the web, he'd die. Well, I watched the spiders for awhile, building their webs, and right then and there I knew I had it made. I said—and I said it out

loud—'Angelo, if those tiny creatures can construct one of the engineering wonders of the animal world, if they can weave a truly marvelous work of art—and base their entire lives and livelihood on instinct and a puff of wind—then, by golly, with your brain, you should be able to do the same!'

"I got up and went home—and I started weaving my own web."

Nearly two thousand years ago, King Alfred watched a spider spinning his web. It too gave him the key to his own immortality—and he went out to win the first battle for Britain. In its way, the battle that Angelo Poffo fought was just as important, and like King Alfred, he won it.

Since that memorable "Day of the Spider," the career of Angelo Poffo has been featured by many ups and few downs. In his meteoric rise he had one bad period, in 1958; that was when his chosen domain, Chicago to Sheboygan and south to Kentucky, was blacked out by the death of live TV out of Chicago's Marigold Arena. It resulted in a near-disastrous skid for Poffo and the other top stars who depended on Midwest outlets for their livelihood. However, Angelo took control of the wheel and steered himself

onto safe ground again within a few months.

The new ground was Nebraska's TV territory serviced by KETV in Omaha. There he was an immediate sensation with his "Italian Neck-Breaker" hold and flamboyant costumes, together with the slick professionalism that characterized his mat work. Not to forget the added garnishing of manager-partner Bronko Lubich, who furnished tuxedoed villainy at its best—or worst—by arousing the fans to a fury with his insults and perfidious actions on behalf of his client.

But Poffo grew tired of the dullness of the Great Plains and moved into the lush sub-tropics of Georgia. There, overnight, he experienced the resounding success of his previous conquests. Moving around even more, he and Lubich then made a shambles of the West Coast and Texas—and finally came round robin a couple of years ago by re-taking the Midwest, now back on television.

There the success, so coolly calculated and engineered by Poffo on the desolate shores of Lake Michigan, reached its climax. He won the "TV Championship" in slam-bang style, matched up with the elephantine villainy of Dick the Bruiser to form one of history's most destructive tag teams—and night after night left wrestling fans limp and sleepless.

Today, after an atomical mat victory, or during a quiet game of chess; or while rough-housing at home with little Randy and Lanny, age eight and six, with wife Judy looking on happily; or while strolling along the beach with only the shore birds and his memories for company—Angelo Poffo can look back with pride on the dozen years of his mat career and what he has made of it. He is unique among the top-rated wrestlers of the world.

For only he has used the sheer power of his intellect to raise himself to the top of a profession dominated for three thousand years by brute power, biffs and bombast.

We salute Angelo Poffo, richly deserving of WRESTLING REVIEW's first award as Wrestler of the Month. ●

BY STANLEY WESTON

MITSU ARAKAWA HAS GOOD REASON FOR BEING A KID

Many wrestlers try to destroy their opponents with every move available to them. But of all the villains in modern wrestling, almond-eyed Mitsu has the best reason for being





Arakawa digs his fingers into Wilbur Snyder's stomach probing for the delicate nerves which will paralyze him. If pressure is held too long death can occur in a matter of seconds.

THE ISLAND CITY WAS QUIET. The early morning sun of this August day in 1945 was warm but partly obscured by the overcast. In the crooked streets peddlers and hawkers were beginning to stir. A line of farmers toiled into the market place to haggle with the merchants. From the docks, the early fishermen were returning with their first catches.

One of the fishermen was a tall, unusually muscular teenager who was learning his craft. Already his abilities were recognized throughout the fleet, for his strength was incredible and his endurance unbelievable. He had often dived among the oyster beds, remaining under the surface for up to three full minutes.

As the young fisherman stepped from his boat, a friend, Hayuki, called from the market, fifty yards up the street. "Mitsu, hurry—we have a customer who will buy all our fish!"

Mitsu waved. "In a moment. First I must retrieve my knife. It dropped overboard last night. Wait for me." He set his basket of fish on the pier, then stood on the edge and prepared to dive into the

shallow water near his boat. Just then he felt a slight trembling in the air. Distantly, he seemed to hear the hum of airplane engines. If the faint sound were indeed an airplane, there was nothing to worry about—for even if it were an enemy bomber it was too high to do any real damage.

He straightened, took a deep breath, let half of it half out—and dived.

Mitsu was underneath the water for about three minutes. During that three minutes the history of the world was altered.

At the bottom, the youth searched with his hands in the mud. Then the faint green light shone on metal. His knife. Mitsu reached for it. But he never touched it, for at that moment something hit him in the chest. It was like a gigantic hammer that struck from all sides at once, nearly crushing the life from him. Almost unconscious, the boy wheeled in the water, which had suddenly begun surging as though part of a gigantic tidal wave. The bottom disappeared in a cloud of mud.



Arakawa lets out a shrill yell as he sets to pounce on stricken Ernie Dusek for the kill.

His air all but gone, Mitsu struggled frantically toward what he hoped was the surface, although in the mud he could not tell his direction. At last his head broke the surface. Shaking the water from his eyes, Mitsu Arakawa looked out upon hell.

Closest to him was his own boat. It was a mass of flames, like all of the other fishing boats in the harbor. Even as he watched, horrified, the boats began sinking with vast spluttering sounds. Weak with terror, Mitsu reached the dock and climbed shakily up to the top. He could not believe what he saw. His mind could not grasp it all.

For his city, the place of his birth and of the happy years of his youth, was a gigantic furnace whose door had been ripped off. Wherever he looked there was flame roaring toward the sky. The center of town was a holocaust. Where the market, with its flimsy tents and bamboo stalls once stood, there was nothing. His friend, Hayuki, had vanished into the air, along with the hundreds of farmers and fishermen he had heard laughing and talking only

four minutes before.

And over it all, rising thousands of feet above the remains of the city, was a vast cloud that swirled with orange flame. Mitsu watched in a trance, until it took the form of a monster mushroom composed of the dust and debris of the dead.

At last, having grasped the fact that the enemy had somehow destroyed his city with the greatest air raid in history—they must, he decided, have dropped a thousand bombs all at once—he went about the job of helping the injured. Like his fellow survivors, those who had escaped unhurt, he walked in a daze, doing automatically the things that had to be done. And when the long day was over and the count was in, they knew that one-fourth of the population had died during that minute-long nightmare, and one-sixth were wounded or missing.

That night, standing on a hill above the still-burning rubble that had been Hiroshima, Mitsu Arakawa looked up at the dark sky and shook his fist. "I will get even," he said aloud, "—I will get even—if it takes all my life!"

Fifteen years later, the former fisherman tries not to look back on that terrible day. He is a lifetime away from the slim wiry teenager who was so miraculously saved from the ravages of the Bomb. Weighing 230 and standing 5 feet 10, Arakawa is known as the Great Mitsu. In a half dozen years of professional wrestling he has become the scourge of American wrestlers. He is still doing for Japanese War Imperialists what Karl Von Hess is doing for Adolph Hitler.

However, the powerful Japanese wrestler is not Von Hess. He is not consciously trying to win a personal war against America. That is the most important thing to remember about Mitsu Arakawa—for he is still a part of the tragedy of Hiroshima. He must be understood.

"You have to remember," Arakawa told this writer, "that when I made that childish vow so long ago, I was in a state of shock. Oh, yes, I meant it then. I resolved to kill as many Americans as I could; to start another war, if I could; to go to the States and embark on a campaign of sabotage that would wreck the American economy! My dreams were endless—and impossible.

"But—such ideas were not part of my inner nature. Feeling them so strongly did something to my insides; to my mind. I was always a gentle person. I hated violence. But the Bomb changed that overnight. I was lucky to maintain my sanity. Many of us didn't."

He was asked if he had given up the idea of vengeance.

The big man, whose classical Japanese features make him look like something out of an ancient painting on silk, shook his head. "Yes and no," he said. "A few years after the war, I did not change the vow. I dropped some of the more ridiculous ideas as I grew older and the shock left; but I still resolved to do something. I knew I had to, otherwise I couldn't live with myself. I decided to become a wrestler. That way, I could get even with Americans one at a time." (continued on next page)

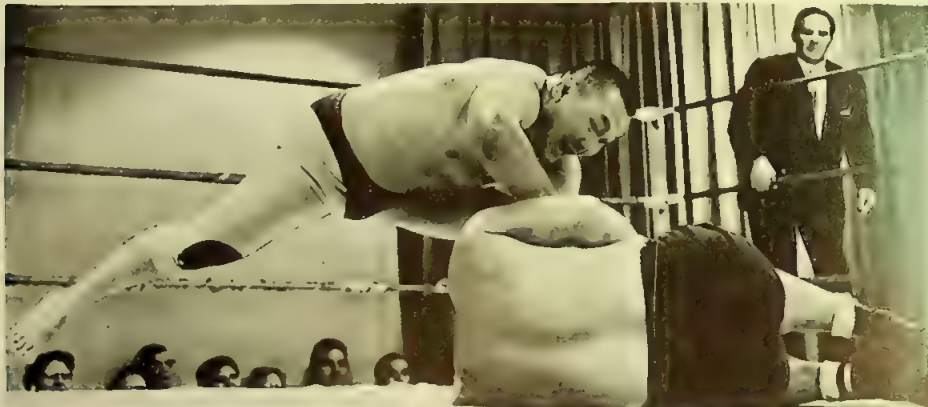




Arakawa wins a fall over the exceptionally talented Wilbur Snyder by rendering him senseless with a complex judo hold.



With his flying hands carrying possible death in every swing, Arakawa storms into his terrified victim.



Once again Wilbur Snyder is rendered unconscious by Arakawa during hectic match in Indianapolis TV Studio. Promoter Balk Estes, who was enraged by the tactics used by the Japanese strongman, rushes into the ring, right, to aid the stricken Snyder.

We told him that Karl Von Hess had the same idea.

"Yes," said Arakawa, "but Von Hess is a different person. He is vicious and vengeful. He hates all Americans. He was born that way. Me, I was made that way. After the war I moved to Hawaii, where I learned to wrestle—not well, but good enough to run out of amateur opposition. I started my campaign in 1955 when I came to America and settled in Detroit. I studied there under Tor Yamato, the great Judo specialist. He made a wrestler out of me. Then another break came when I teamed up with Kinji Shibuya. We made a good tag team and we stayed together three years. I learned a lot during those years."

In 1958 Arakawa went it alone. It seemed that it was time to really embark on his own private war. It was time for revenge.

"But," he said, "somehow, Hiroshima seemed far away and long ago. I told myself that I had grown up, that I should give up those childish ideas. I tried. But—" a look of deepest tragedy came into his slanted Oriental eyes, "—but what I didn't know was that the fires of Hiroshima still burned inside me. Just as thousands of my people were burned and scarred for life, so I have been burned in my mind—and the scars are still there! At night, in my dreams, I am still standing there on the dock, watching my boat sink in flames and my city

(continued on page 60)

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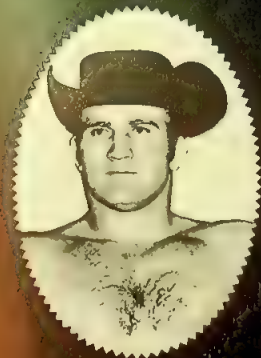
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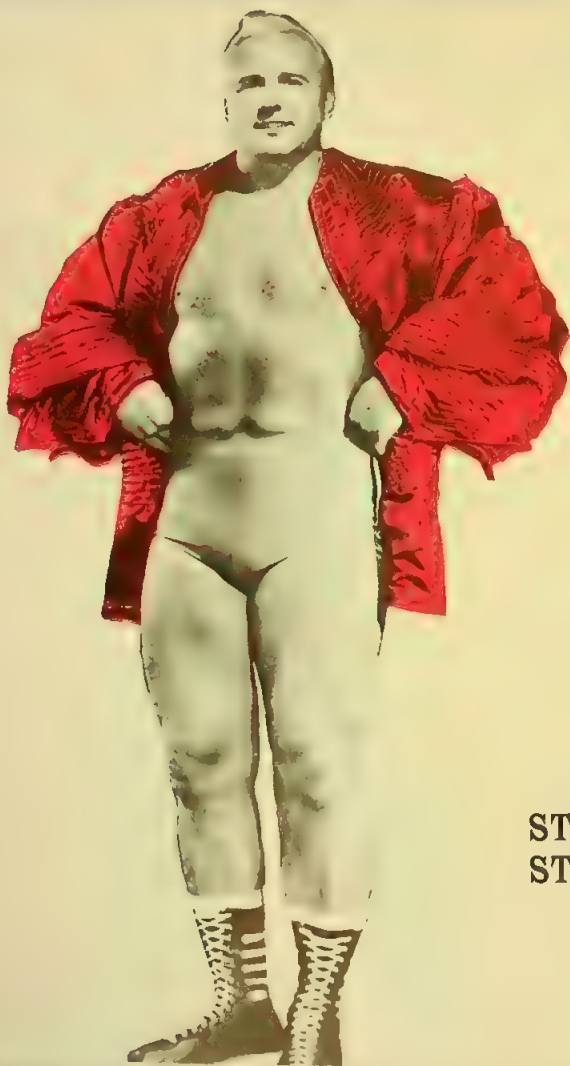
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To:


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BOUNDS WE CAN'T FORGET Chicago — August 16, 1957

Ed Carpentier vs. Lou Thesz

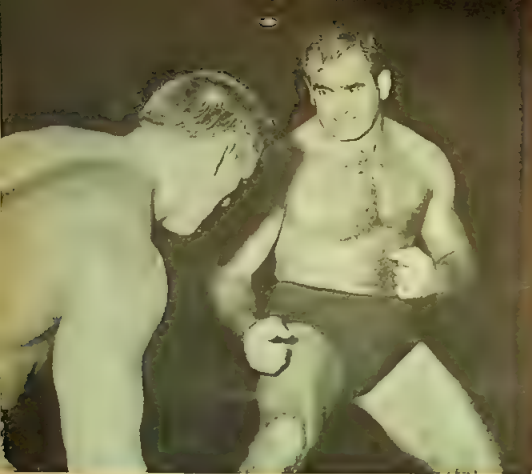


After receiving their instructions from referee Jack Dempsey, Carpentier, right, and ex-champ Lou Thesz shake hands.

More than 8,500 thrilled fans witnessed a bout that will go down in history as one of the classics of our time.

(please turn the page)

BOUTS WE CAN'T FORGET



MORE THAN ONE OLD TIMER shed a nostalgic tear, and many a young timer exclaimed, "This is the way they must have wrestled in the old days!" While in the ring, the old champion and the new one brought back an hour of glory to wrestling. It was August 16, 1957, a never-to-be-forgotten day for those who consider wrestling the greatest contact sport of all. The place was the Chicago Amphitheatre and the 8,450 screaming fans who witnessed the match have engraved it into American folklore.

Here was Lou Thesz, one of the great modern champions, dethroned only two months earlier in the same arena, fighting grimly and valorously to withstand the incredible "mat-obatics" of his conqueror, while attempting to regain the world title that he had held so long and so well.

And here was Edouard Carpentier, the fabulously-muscled French mat hero who, in rising to the top of his profession, seemingly defied gravity and other forces of nature. Rough and rigorous though their first bout had been—in which Edouard had clawed away the crown from Thesz' balding head—this bout was a classic.

"Not since Lee Wycoff and Strangler Lewis fought to a two-hour draw," shrilled a white-thatched ringsider, "have I ever seen anything like this!" When had the Lewis-Wycoff bout taken place? he was asked. "Over thirty years ago—when wrestling was wrestling!"

He took a deep breath as he peered up into the ring where referee Jack Dempsey was raising the 18-inch arm of Ed Carpentier in token of victory.

Carpentier had won the first fall with a Boston Crab in 33:28; Thesz took the second with a body press in 16:04—and the handsome Frenchman took the deciding fall in 13:06 with a series of flying tackles.

"Yes," breathed the old timer as he rose to leave the auditorium, "wrestling was wrestling in those days—and when men like Thesz and Carpentier get into the ring—it still is!"

—And always will be. For a match such as this is never-to-be-forgotten.



Top left: Thesz, with fists clenched, moves towards Carpentier.

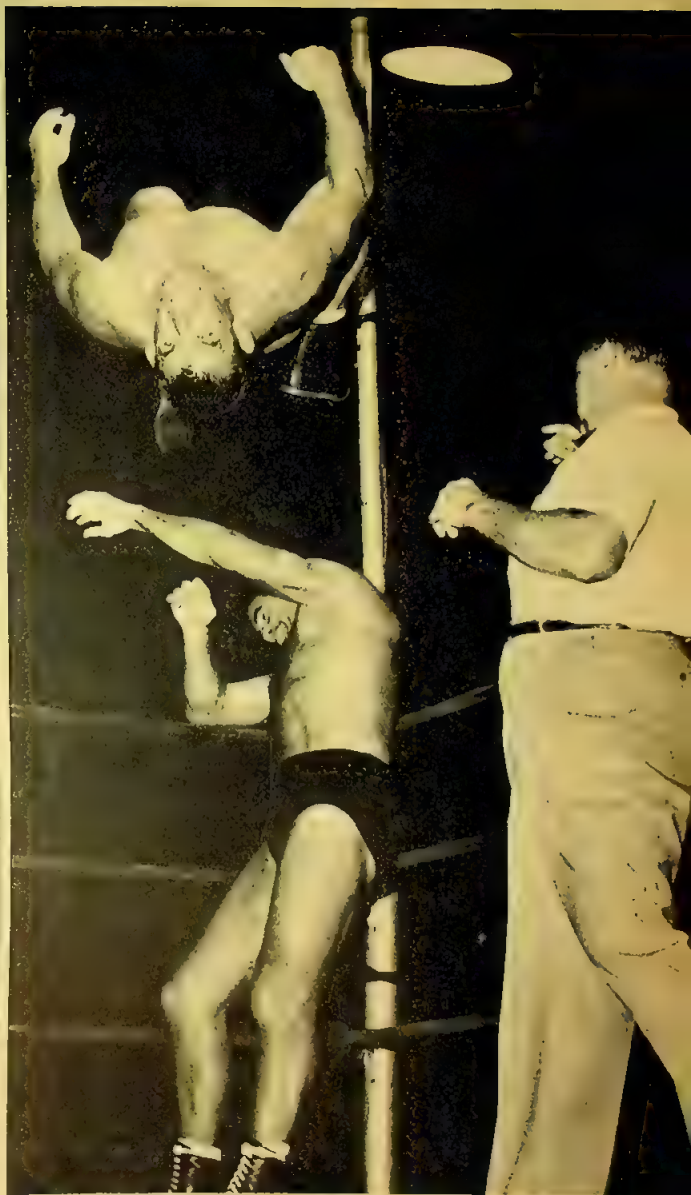
Left: The brilliant Frenchman foils Lou's bid for a flying head scissors by grabbing Thesz' legs and flipping him to the canvas.



Peak action picture catches Carpentier in mid-air as he flips out of Japanese armlock, one of Thesz' best weapons.



Frustrated by Ed's superb skill and his agility, Thesz began to get rough after about ten minutes. Here he rubs elbow across the Frenchman's eyes.



Both Thesz and referee Dempsey instinctively raise their arms to protect themselves as Carpentier executes a flawless back somersault off the ropes.

(please turn the page)



Thesez, his face twisted with agony, takes the full pressure of Ed's punishing hammer lock as bout reaches the twenty minute mark. At this point, the years began to show on the great former champion of the world.



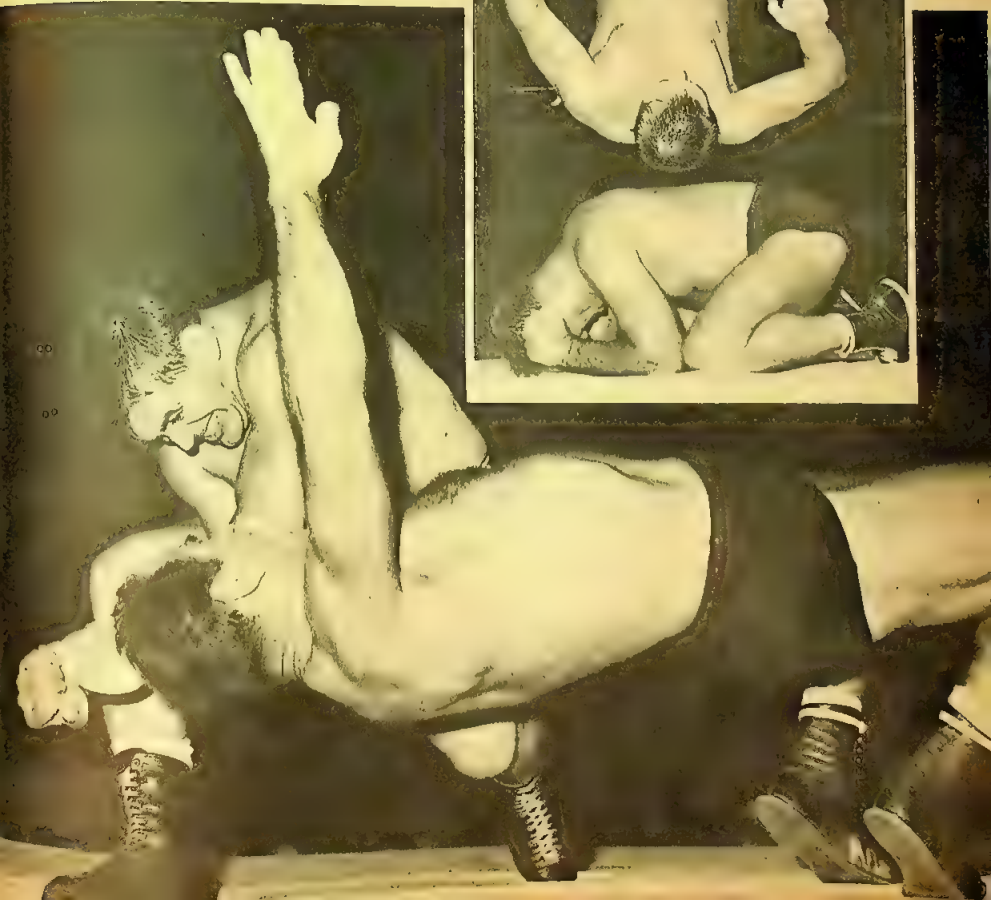
At various stages of match, Thesez displayed some of the extraordinary tactics that made him an immortal of the mat. Here he expertly flips Carpentier off when Ed tried for a pin.



Left: Thesz drops his full weight across Frenchman's body in a try for a fall. But Carpentier squirmed loose as if he were made of rubber.

Right: Carpentier glides gracefully over Thesz in a beautiful-to-watch but otherwise ineffective maneuver. Note how Thesz protects head with his hands.

Below: After fighting to remain on his feet under pressure of double wristlock, Thesz finally sinks to floor. Lou remained clamped in hold four minutes.



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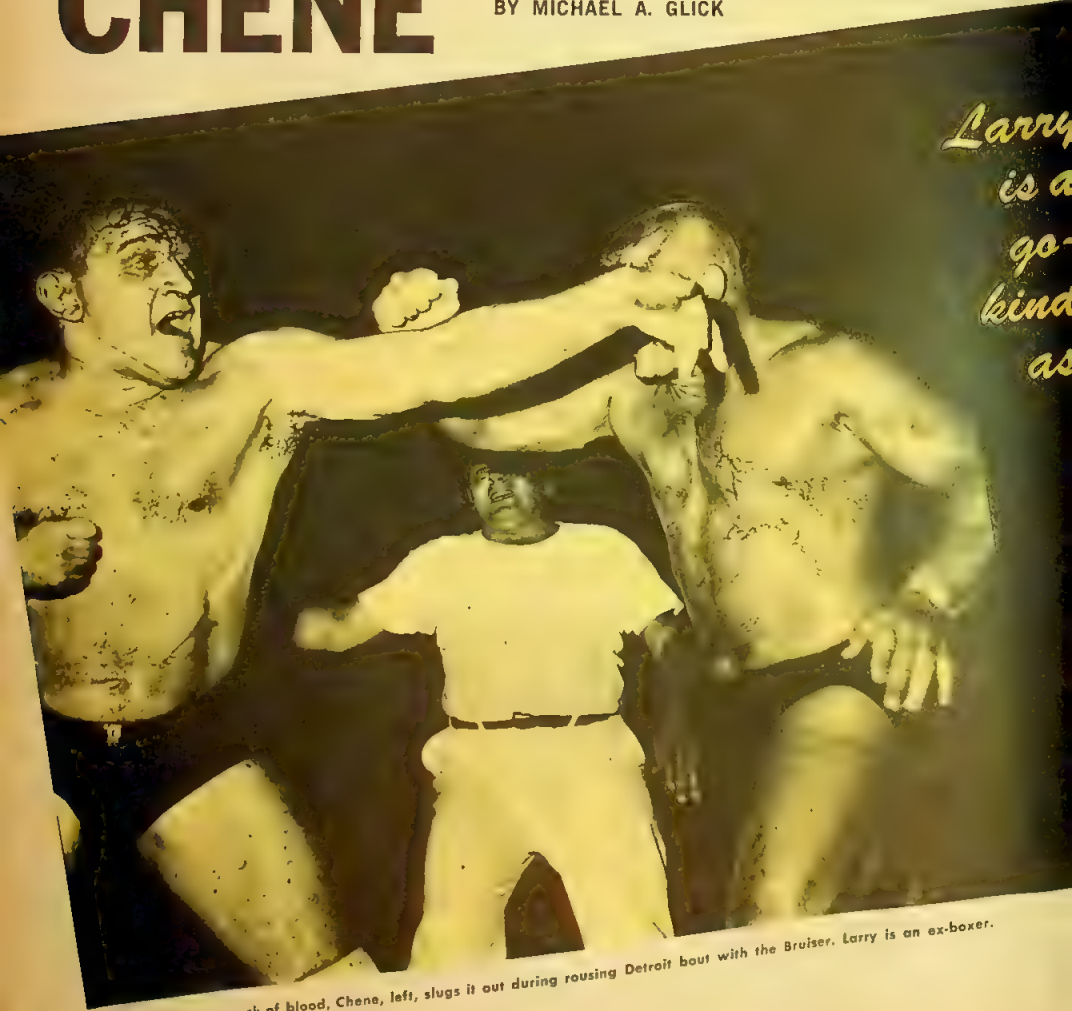
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YOU CAN'T RESTRICT CHENE

BY MICHAEL A. GLICK

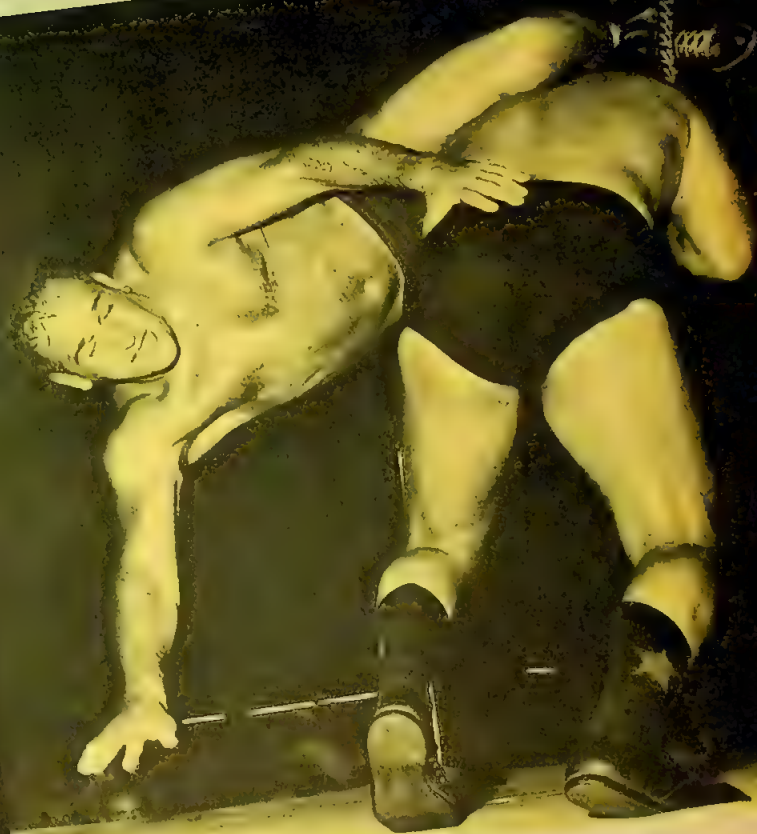


*Larry
is a
go-
kind
as*

His face a mask of blood, Chene, left, slugs it out during rousing Detroit bout with the Bruiser. Larry is an ex-boxer.

AIN

*Chene
happy-
lucky
of guy,
full of life
as he is
of the devil
-But he is
also one of
the world's
best wrestlers*



Chene demonstrates some of the sensational razzle-dazzle that has made him rich and famous.

A STOCKY, BALDING, SOMEWHAT PUDGY man who looks like your friendly druggist could probably be the most beloved wrestler of all, if he wanted to be.

He wants to. And whether he wants to or not, Larry Chene of Detroit is surely destined to go down in history. The history of Detroit! Not since

Henry Ford has any one man done so much for a city. But, whereas Ford made a million dollars, Larry Chene has made a million friends—and in a lot less time. In about six weeks, to be exact.

It all started when Larry left Detroit to go to Texas—that was six years ago—and not for six years did he see his home town again. That may

seem like a strange way to make friends in Detroit—when you're living in Texas. But wait.

So Larry left Detroit after studying classical music for twelve years. With this solid musical education behind him, plus four years at the University of Iowa, he was ready to take over the directorship of the Detroit Symphony. That's why he went down to Texas and became one of America's most successful professional wrestlers.

Now that you're thoroughly confused, we'll unravel the threads which make up the fascinating story of Larry Chene, the man who gave up the podium for the mat.

Born in Detroit 31 years ago, Larry quickly discovered that he had been gifted with two attributes: a musical bent and a muscular build. It was obvious that the two would wage war within him until he made up his mind as to what he intended to be. His mother wanted him to be a musician, which is why he went to study at the conservatory. But he wanted to be an athlete, which is why he took up wrestling at Iowa University. He still thinks that the best wrestlers—at least, those who become successes quickest—have to be products of the amateur ranks. "No amateur can beat a pro, that's for sure," he says, in that effervescent way he has of pouring out conversation, "—but if he has a good amateur background, he'll have it a lot easier when he does turn pro. Today's wrestling is a combination of science and acrobatics—or what you might call roughness. You have to be able to apply a toe hold and a wristlock, and know

The Sheik sticks his finger in Chene's mouth in an attempt to enlarge that already generous opening. But Larry fooled the mighty Arab by simple snapping his teeth together.



how to slip from one hold to another. But you also have to be able to administer a spectacular drop kick and flying head scissors. Also, since a lot of big rough guys have taken up wrestling, you must know how to match them in the dirty department. In the long run, the guy who can wrestle both scientifically and rough house will make the headlines, the Best Ten Lists—and the big money."

That's the story of Larry Chene's mat career. After proving his skill as an amateur seven years ago, he was spotted by Detroit's dynamic promoter, Bert Ruby, who saw more than just another wrestler in young Larry. He saw a glowing personality. Today, Bert reminisces: "Larry was a jolly kid—always smiling and joking, a real extrovert. He'd play all sorts of stunts on the other guys, and even his practical jokes had imagination to them. He even made you like it when he gave you a hotfoot!"

"I remember one time, not long after I began teaching him the ins and outs of pro wrestling, he came into the gym with his arm in a sling and his leg all bandaged up. He showed us a newspaper clipping that said he'd been in an auto accident. But he insisted on wrestling! He took on one of the guys—we thought he was nuts, of course—and tossed him ten feet—then picked him up and tossed him again. While we all stared in amazement he took off the bandages and laughed like hell. He'd had the phoney clipping made up by a printer. Now, most guys who do things like that you hate. But not Larry, he makes you love him!"

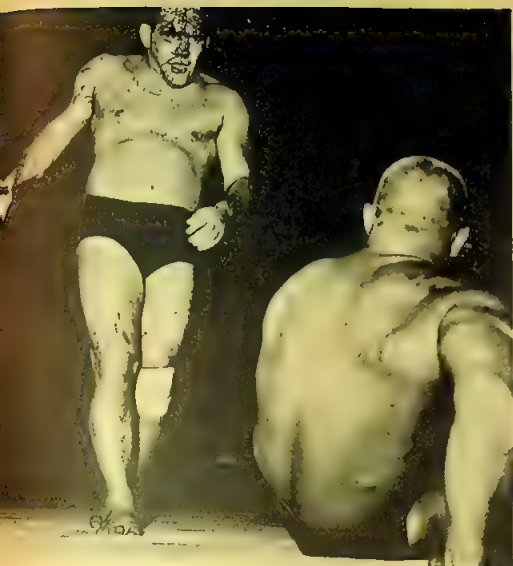
This was the fun-loving prankster who Bert Ruby sent down to Texas for "seasoning," once the 24-year-old Chene (pronounced Shane) decided in favor of wrestling as opposed to music. "You have to be an introvert to be a musician," Larry will tell you. "You have to twist your mind inside out and suffer." He grins that inimitable grin of his, "I prefer to twist somebody else inside out, and make them suffer!"

He never intended to stay six years in Texas. "Once he had a few dozen bouts under his belt," says Ruby, "I intended to bring him back to Detroit. "But—well, they do things big down there—and Larry likes to do things big too."

He was so "big" in Texas that they refused to let him go home. And Larry liked it. One thing led to another, including a wife and four children who, it was felt, would calm him down and settle him. The children, Carol, Pat, Donna and Mike, calmed him down, but they didn't succeed in settling their happy-go-lucky father. Which is just as well, because it's an unsettled Chene that the fans enjoy most. The way they did in Texas.

The Chene style is to keep moving constantly—to get the enemy off balance with a variety of swift moves, then clobber him with a variety of swifter ones. And Chene is one of the fastest wrestlers today. He reminds you of Rocca, Carpentier and the better acrobatic type wrestlers. Coupled with this, however, is the patented Chene sense of ring humor that makes him so unique.

Our reporter, witnessing the latest Chene attack against perennial foe Ricki Cortez, found himself



not counting the ones who heard it on the air—Cortez let out a yawk of rage. He leaped at the smiling Chene, and seized him in a headlock. He wasn't kidding, either—as some of the TV fans may have thought. But before he could decapitate the surprised Chene, the little (if you can call a muscular 220-pounder little) Detroitier picked the monstrous Cortez up by the heels, broke the headlock and hurled him clear over the announcer's head and onto the hard floor of the auditorium. Cortez bounced like a ball.

As if nothing had happened, Chene again spoke into the microphone in a normal tone of voice, "Now, as I was saying before being so rudely interrupted—" And, once the astonished announcer got his wits back, they finished the interview with Ricki Cortez still lying beside them unconscious!

It was a sample of why Chene found it so hard to leave Texas. He would do something like that—and the hard-bitten Texans, who love 'em tough, would

Chene has murder in his blood-covered eyes as he menacingly stalks his most hated rival, the Bruiser. They have faced each other several times with the victories evenly divided.

Larry is one of the most agile of all wrestlers, equal in that department with such outstanding acrobats as Ricki Starr and Antonino Rocca. But Chene is also an exceptional wrestler.

laughing from beginning to end of the match—except for a couple of times when Larry got serious. That's when Cortez wound up with a split eyebrow, a split lip and another defeat at the hands of his nemesis. The Chene-Cortez feud is one of the most exciting things going on in Midwest mat circles, and it, unfortunately, is carried on outside the ring. That's how bad it has got in a year.

During the intermission of this particular Detroit bout, Larry was being interviewed by the TV announcer. He was, as usual, a delight before the mike, making with the jokes and being his most affable self. Then, in walked Cortez, a huge, extremely muscular individual who outweighs the 220 pound Chene by thirty pounds. Cortez is known as one of the toughest roughest wrestlers between the Missouri and the Ohio.

We won't say that Cortez is jealous of Chene's popularity or of his ability as a speaker. But it probably does rankle in the big fellow's ponderous chest that Chene manages to beat him more often than not. "I'm a better wrestler than that little punk," we heard Cortez complain, "so why does he beat me? I've probably got a psychological block against him. When we're in the ring, I'm thinking so much about how I hate him that I can't get set. By the time I do, he's beat me two falls!"

Be that as it may, on this occasion Cortez stalked past Chene and "accidentally" knocked over the microphone as Larry was talking into it. Larry didn't bat an eye. He grinned mischievously and said, "Sorry, I didn't know you were loaded."

As five thousand fans screeched with laughter—



scream for more. Larry decided to stay put. He settled down insofar as buying a house and living in it is concerned. But he was still restless. He couldn't identify the feeling.

"It got real bad last Christmas," he'll tell you. "I decided to take the family and go home for a couple of weeks during the Holidays. Just for a change, that's all."

"It turned out to be quite a change. Hearing he was in town, Bert Ruby contacted him at once. They talked over old times—and then Ruby started to discuss new times—"How about a match—just one—here at home, for me?" he asked innocently. "It'll keep you in shape and maybe show you that the fans here at home are as friendly as those Texans."

Larry grudgingly said okay. After all, he was home for a rest. So he wrestled. The rest is the history we were talking about.

Six weeks later, Chene was still in Detroit. Still wrestling. And breaking every record for attendance in the city's history. Throughout the state of Michigan in fact. For comparison, we'll use the old record set by the great Lou Thesz in Saginaw. In an appearance in that city, Lou drew \$1600. Chene drew \$3,000 not just once, but five times in a row!

Then there's the fantastic figures from Kingston, Michigan. Larry, a few weeks after his campaign began, went into that town and drew 1,470 persons into a small auditorium. The reason this figure is outstanding is that there are only 450 persons living in all of Kingston! And so it went. He packed almost 4,000 into the arena at Caro, a town of 2,000.

And he hasn't stopped yet. Being the extrovert he is, he loves people as much as they love him. A walk up Detroit's main street with Chene is a wondrous experience. The fans crowd around him—not roughly, the way it is with some stars, but with a kind of enthusiastic gentleness that is a happy thing to see. And Larry is in his element as he does a handspring or backflip right there on the street, in between signing autographs. Sometimes he'll even hold an impromptu wrestling class with a bunch of teenagers, invariably stopping traffic.

It's been like that for a year now. Is he ever going back to Texas?

Larry will look up at the question, as though he'd never heard it before. Actually, it's the one asked him more often than any other, especially by Detroiters, who would be mighty sad if he were to leave. "This is my home town," Larry will say. "—and now it looks like it's my home. I'm not making any promises, not even to myself. But I think I may stay. Of course—" and the old grin comes back, "—if I should get that restless feeling again—"

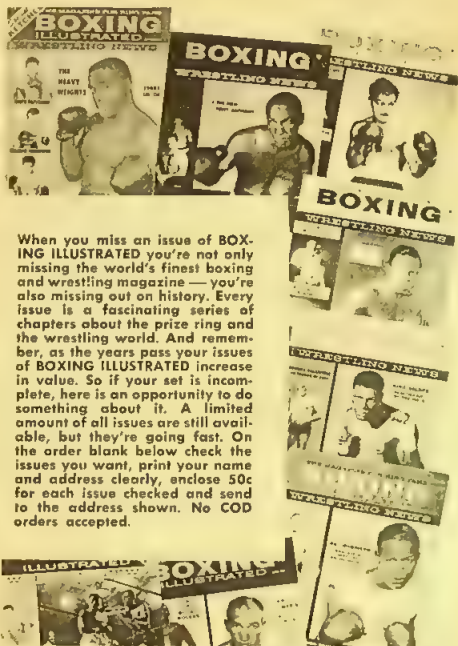
He probably won't. Not for long, anyway. Larry Chene has it made in Detroit. And Detroit has made Larry Chene. Made him happier than he's ever been in his whole life. It would be a shame to change it.

Even old Henry Ford would agree to that. ●

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RULES

(continued from page 10)

Although it was impossible for WRESTLING REVUE to get a copy of the projected rules, Mr. Muchnick did give us a sneak preview of some of the more important rules he hopes will be universally adopted.

1. There will be no physical contact between any wrestler and any referee.

2. To prevent flagrant violations during tag team matches, the post ropes will be made six inches shorter.

3. The post rope will not be used to strangle or otherwise bind a wrestler.

4. The count limiting the duration of an illegal hold will be "two" (It now varies between three to six).

5. A wrestler may be allowed only 15 seconds in which to re-enter the ring. (It is now 20 seconds in most states.)

There is some doubt about another important rule that many promoters and fans think should be adopted: The use of maiming "holds" such as used in karate and judo. Sam Muchnick says this controversial subject is now being debated at length. "Such devices as the judo chop and the so-called tomahawk are extremely dangerous. Wrestlers have been injured, even permanently crippled, by them. They are used largely by the sizeable influx of Japanese wrestlers who have come into vogue after World War II. The chances are that their use will, if not prohibited entirely, be restricted. Our decision will be weighed after discussion with the wrestlers themselves. After all, it's their livelihood—and lives—that are at stake."

So at last the way is open for adoption of universal—and sensible—wrestling rules. Like all legislation, such adoption takes time. Integration laws took 100 years to enact. And it took women 150 years to get their vote. But progress can't be halted forever.

And the adoption of universal rules represents progress in wrestling. We're happy to see it coming. So is Pepper Gomez.

You should be too. ■

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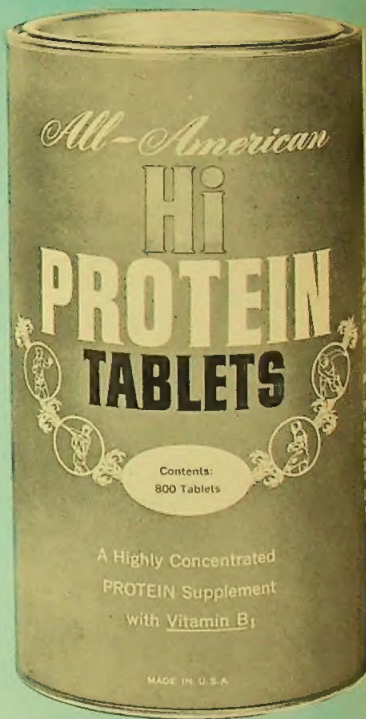
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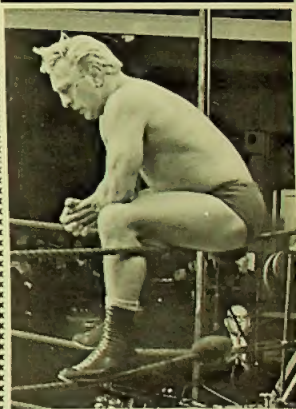


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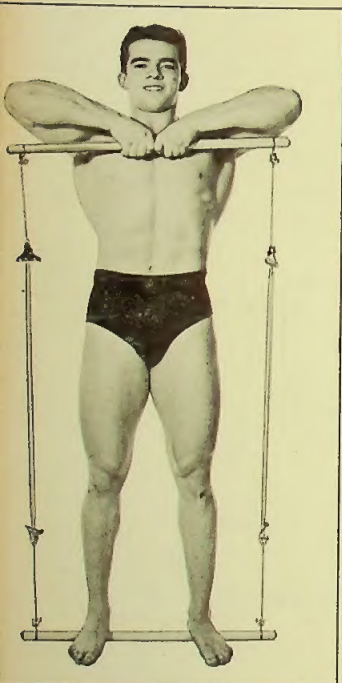
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